

Page 15
dian
girl lost
gain
America's
back kid

Wednesday February 14 1996

Table of international news rates for various countries including Albania, Australia, Belgium, etc.

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

50 years of microchips

Life BC (Before Computers)

Guardian 2: with today's television

Society

The spirit of trees inspires Newbury protesters

G2 Pages 10/11

Arts

The carnal clinch provides fodder for Valentine's Day

G2 Pages 12/13

New policy means 22,000 a year will avoid prison

Howard to end jailing over fines

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

THE jailing of more than 22,000 fine defaulters a year is to end, the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, announced last night. New guidance is to be issued to magistrates in the spring which will end the centuries-old practice of sending to prison petty offenders who have repeatedly failed to pay court fines.

"Together with the Lord Chancellor, I am reviewing the powers and procedures available to the courts to ensure that they can enforce payment of fines without resorting to imprisonment save in the most exceptional circumstances," Mr Howard told the prison service conference in Brighton yesterday.

"I remain concerned that too many fine defaulters are committed to prison. There are up to 500 fine defaulters in prison at any one time."

Mr Howard said they imposed an additional burden on hard pressed prisons, adding: "And the fine is expunged — thereby frustrating the court's intention that the prisoner pay something back to the community."

The decision coincides with a sharply rising prison population — expected to hit a record 53,000 in the next fortnight at a time of a 13.3 per cent cut in running costs.

There is also increasing public concern over the jail-

ing of petty offenders, particularly women with severe multiple debt problems who have not paid television licences and poll tax defaulters.

The latest published figures show that 22,500 fine defaulters were jailed in 1994 — making up more than a quarter of those sent to prison that year. Most were in prison for less than a week. Forty per cent of the men involved were jailed for failing to pay motoring fines. Nearly a fifth of the 1,450 women jailed were imprisoned for failing to have a television licence.

The Home Secretary confirmed yesterday that he is to introduce a white paper later this year which will introduce minimum sentences for repeat burglars and drug dealers and "two strikes and you're out" mandatory life sentences for repeat rapists.

This package could add 10,000 to 20,000 inmates to the annual prison population.

Mr Howard refused to outline what alternative measures he will use to ensure that fines remain a credible court sentence. Among options canvassed are greater use of community service orders; money payment supervision orders under which probation officers help defaulters sort out debts; and electronic tagging.

The decision to end the use of jail was widely welcomed by penal reformers and within the prison service.

David Roddan of the Prison Governors' Association said Mr Howard's statement was very welcome.

Paul Cavardino of the Penal Affairs Consortium said the use of prison for people whose original offences were insufficiently serious to deserve custody was an indefensible misuse of the over-stretched prison system.

Harry Fletcher of the National Association of Probation Officers warned that even if all fine defaulters were diverted from jail it would only save £14 million.

"The Home Secretary's sentencing package will add 20,000 to the prison population at a cost of £400 million a year. Prisons face an unprecedented crisis."

The jailing of fine defaulters was highlighted last week in the *Guardian*, which said that thousands of women were trapped in a cycle of poverty, law-breaking, court fines and eventually prison.

Jail sentences imposed on women often caused immense distress and extra costs for care of dependent children.

• The sacked prison service director-general, Derek Lewis, issued a summons yesterday against the Home Office to force the disclosure of key official documents relating to his dismissal.

Mr Lewis's under the First Division Association, said that four months after his dismissal the Home Office had not yet made any proposal to resolve the matter and pay compensation.

The Home Secretary said last night that it was "an entirely routine matter in litigation" that would be dealt with by the lawyers.

Leighton centenary celebration recreates high period of Victorian art



THE actress, Dorothy Dene, (left) will play Lord Leighton's model, Kate Hargreaves, who posed for the painting

Flaming June, right, in the centenary celebrations of the artist at Leighton House, Holland Park, London, starting on Friday and

running until April 21. Leighton (1830-96), President of the Royal Academy, aesthete, bon viveur and creator of the Trafalgar

Square Hons, created his house as a palace in celebration of the muse of the arts. It has been recreated for this year's celebrations

down to the William Morris furnishings and the smells of cigars, linseed oil and turpentine. PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK MARTIN

City 'playing Mr Bumble with school dinners'

David Ward

LABOUR-controlled Liverpool city council was accused yesterday of employing workhouse-style practices when it emerged that officers had suggested school dinner portions could be cut by 10 per cent to save money.

David Alton, Liberal Democrat MP for Mossley Hill, said: "It conjures up ideas of Mr Bumble telling Oliver Twist he cannot have any more. Are we going to see a generation of Oliver Twists pleading for more food? There are plenty of other areas they should be tackling before they take the food off a child's plate."

Liverpool has to find ways of saving £28.5 million to stay within its capping limit. In the search for cuts, education officers came up with a range of possibilities.

One option was that Liverpool might join other authorities in providing meals only for children entitled to free dinners: another was for the 10 per cent cut in portions.

The officers commented: "Meal proportions are not large and this reduction would be in free school meals which for many children is their main meal of the day."

The imprecise wording started a row, with Labour insisting the comment implied that the cut could prove unacceptable because the children would suffer most who would be the city's poorest. But Paul Clein, the Liberal Democrats'



education spokesman, was how to go along with a more literal interpretation — that a Labour council might target those children who received free dinners and accounted for 63 per cent of the school meals budget.

Their portions would be cut but pupils who handed over 80p in primary schools and 90p in secondaries would find their meal sizes unchanged. "That's the way it reads," said Mr Clein.

He added: "What will they say to children? Last week you had three sausages, this week you can only have two. It's an absolute disgrace."

Neville Bann, Labour chairman of the education committee, suggested that Mr Clein's fury was based on a misreading of the officers' comment.

"I want to stress that none of the options include offering smaller portions to those pupils who receive free meals as opposed to those who pay for meals," he said. "Such claims are, at best, a misunderstanding of the position or, at worst, malicious scaremongering."

Scott leads calls for early access to arms report

Richard Norton-Taylor and Michael White

THE Government last night was facing a public relations disaster over its handling of tomorrow's Scott Report as the judge charged with investigating the arms-to-Iraq controversy led frustrated MPs and peers in last-minute demands for an end to news management over its publication.

It emerged that Sir Richard Scott strongly urged the Government to release his report at least an hour before Ian Lang, the trade and industry secretary, gets up in the Commons at 3.30pm tomorrow to give the Government's verdict on the 1,800-page document.

This, the judge said, would help public debate and discussion to take place on a balanced and informed basis. He said it would be doubtful whether this would be achieved if the Government continued to insist that the report was made generally available only after Mr Lang rises to make his statement.

Sir Richard's concerns were spelt out in a letter from Christopher Muttukumaru, the Scott inquiry secretary, to Mr Lang's private office. It came amid renewed claims of further attempts to undermine the Scott report in an admission yesterday.

Turn to page 2, column 7

Letters, page 8; David Mackie, page 9

Bruton warms to Major's plan for Northern Ireland

David Sharrock and Patrick Wintour

THE reconciliation of the Irish and British governments over the peace process took a step forward yesterday when the Irish prime minister, John Bruton, significantly warmed to John Major's proposals for elections in Northern Ireland.

However, Mr Bruton said his condition for considering backing elections was that they should follow Dublin's proposed "proximity" talks and then "lead directly and speedily, without equivocation, to all-party negotiations."

Mr Bruton's speech, which came in a Dail debate on the IRA's Docklands bomb attack last Friday, marked a change in tone from his original reaction to the elections proposal. He had said elections would "pour petrol on the flames".

British ministers expressed quiet satisfaction over the Irish prime minister's softening attitude towards the proposals. Although Downing Street did not disguise its continued scepticism about proximity talks, it is possible that these talks could be woven into the British plan for elections.

The two prime ministers are expected to meet soon to discuss the plan.

It emerged yesterday that Mr Major is shortly to set out a consultation paper on his election plan. A key element will be the speed with which the Prime Minister envisages the elected body moving to all-party talks.

In an attempt to assuage sceptical nationalists, ministers privately promise that a timetable will be set out in the legislation on the elections. Ministers claim Unionists have signed up to this in the past week.

However, the new optimism was dealt a blow when by a lack of enthusiasm for Mr Major's plan from the pivotal figure of John Hume, leader of the nationalist SDLP. "We have been down that road twice before. Twice before, it ended in disaster and made the problem worse."

He added that Unionist parties in the elections might "seek headline mandates", and "some parties could seek mandates not to talk to certain people" — a reference to a Unionist boycott of talks with Sinn Fein until the decommissioning of IRA weapons had begun.

John Taylor, the Ulster Unionist deputy leader, underscored this point by insisting that agreement on the phased decommissioning was a precondition of talks.

A further and more immediate stumbling block is likely to be Britain's insistence that it will not allow Sinn Fein to enter all-party talks, or even possibly stand in the elections, without a return to the ceasefire.

But the Ulster Unionist Martin Smyth said his party would hold proximity talks with Sinn Fein before elections — as did Ian Paisley — even if the IRA called a ceasefire.

Mr Bruton told the Dail he was satisfied that a viable basis existed for restoring peace. He asked the IRA to think again. "A quarter-century of violence did not progress any of your political aims. Indeed, it divided Ireland more than ever before."

He said he had made an act of faith by believing and trusting Sinn Fein. "I believed that they had made an irreversible commitment to peace. That act of faith has now been thrown back in my face by the IRA."

However, Mr Bruton said he shared the Republicans' frustration at the slow pace of the peace process.

Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein leader, said yesterday that putting the peace process back on track would be difficult. "The only way is for real talks and all-party talks. That is one of the reasons why it collapsed, because the British broke the commitments they made to bring that about."

Meanwhile, the Irish opposition Fianna Fail leader, Bertie Ahern, launched a stinging attack on Mr Major's government. He said: "Over the past 18 months, they singularly failed to provide any credible or broadly acceptable route into all-party talks. In public at least, it was not apparent that they had lifted a finger to urge the Unionists towards talks."

IT'S AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN ACHIEVE WITH A LITTLE INSIGHT

Coleg Harlech is a residential college for people over 20 with no formal educational qualifications. Admission is by interview and full grants are available to successful applicants. Courses cover a wide range of subjects and assist university entrance.

Call Mena on 01765 780 363 or fill in the coupon below.

COLEG HARLECH
THE COLLEGE FOR ADULT OPPORTUNITIES

Send to: Coleg Harlech, FREEPOST, Harlech, Gwynedd, C5992 G1402

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
POSTCODE _____

Inside
News 2
Letters 8
Comment 9
Obituaries 10
Financial news 11

G2

Notes and Queries 4
Wheen's World 7
Style 8/9
Society 10/11
Arts 12/13

Quick Crossword 15
Cartoons 15
Radio 16
Television 16
Weather 16

9 770261 307330



older of US rats



Massimo Troisi (right) is up for a posthumous Oscar for *Il Postino*, as are Elisabeth Shue and Nicholas Cage (top left) for *Leaving Las Vegas*, and Anthony Hopkins (above left) for *Nixon*

British talent threatens to eclipse Hollywood in race for Oscars

Christopher Reed in Los Angeles
A FIGLET, a dead man and a subtitled Italian film will compete for this year's Oscars in a mixed field, in which Hollywood fares poorly but a Briton is nominated in every acting category and two are in the running for best director.



Michael Figgis: director of *Leaving Las Vegas*



Michael Radford: director of *Il Postino* (The Postman)



Emma Thompson: twice for *Sense and Sensibility*



Meryl Streep: competing for best actress award

23 years. Its star, Massimo Troisi, died at the age of 41 just after the film was completed, but could win the first posthumous best actor Oscar since Peter Finch in 1976. Britain's Tim Roth is nominated as best supporting actor for *Rob Roy*, and Kate Winslet for best supporting actress for *Sense and Sensibility*. In the animated feature section, Nick Park from Bristol could win his third Oscar for *A Closer Shave*. Although the US space flight drama *Apollo 13* leads with nine nominations, its star, Tom Hanks, was denied the chance of a third acting Oscar in a row. In a surprise success, Babe — a beguiling story about a sheep-herding piglet — has won seven nominations, including best film, equalling *Sense and Sensibility*. Thompson competes for best actress with Susan Sarandon in the death penalty study *Dead Man Walking*, Elisabeth Shue as a prostitute in *Leaving Las Vegas*, Meryl Streep in *Bridges of Madison County*, and Sharon Stone in *Casino* — for which Stone

won the best actress Golden Globe award last month. Sean Penn could win best actor for his part as the condemned man in *Dead Man Walking*. Along with Hopkins, he is up against the Globe winner Nicholas Cage, the star of *Leaving Las Vegas*, and Richard Dreyfuss in the Disney tear-jerker *Mr Holland's Opus*. Competing for best film are *Apollo 13*, *Braveheart*, *Babe*, *Sense and Sensibility* and *Il Postino*. While the Italian entry and *Leaving Las Vegas* were both heavily promoted, neither has made more than \$16 million (\$10.5 million) at the box office. Among the newcomers are Kevin Spacey, for best supporting actor in *The Usual Suspects*, and Mare Winningham, for best supporting actress in *Georgia*. The best director nominations are all first-timers, and the lack of big names or head-to-head rivalry may make for a lacklustre ceremony next month.

Joan bites back with tale of the amoeba

IAN KATZ in New York
ALEXIS Carrington got her revenge. Giving evidence for the second time in her legal battle with Random House, Joan Collins summoned every one of her famous feminine wiles and reminded a Manhattan court why she was a star of the screen if not the printed page. In marked contrast to her performance on the witness stand last week, when she was reduced to tears by the withering questioning of Random House's lawyer Robert Callagy, Ms Collins smilingly shrugged off inconsistencies in her testimony like a diletta caught with a chocolate éclair. When the attorney approached her to resume his attack yesterday, she flashed him a flirtatious smile and said: "Oh Mr Callagy, you're not supposed to come close to me. Not without permission." The British actress-cum-novelist returned to the witness stand as the week-long trial that has pitched her against America's mightiest publishing company mandered to a close. Random House is suing Ms Collins, aged 62, for the return of a \$1.2 million advance on a two-novel deal because it claims her writing was too appalling to put into print. The former *Dynasty* star, who played Alexis, is countering for \$4 million she insists the publisher owes her. Ms Collins was in commanding form from the moment she stepped on to the stand yesterday morning. In place of the exasperation and embarrassment that marked her performance last week, she affected a weary nonchalance as Mr Callagy forced her to acknowledge a string of inconsistencies between her testimony this week and in two previous depositions. "I have a terrible memory," she remarked with a wry smile after another discrepancy had been exposed. She refused even to be hurried by the famously brusque Judge Ira Grammermann, a man whose determination to speed up the wheels of justice has earned him the nickname, "the Rocket Docket", in New York legal circles. Ordered by the judge to state precisely the point at which she stopped writing one novel and moved on to the next, she explained def-

Anglican clergy lean to Lib Dems

Madeline Bunting Religious Affairs Editor
A CLERGY which is more likely to vote for the Liberal Democrats than any other party prepares to a congregation dominated by ageing Conservative voters with a conscience, according to figures published yesterday in a study of the membership of the General Synod of the Church of England. Nearly half of the House of Clergy (45.5 per cent) and House of Bishops (42.9 per cent) voted Liberal Democrat in the 1992 election, while Conservatives attracted 44 per cent of the House of Laity. Although Labour has improved its appeal to the Church since 1987 it trails behind the Liberal Democrats. The most surprising and disturbing finding of the analysis of the 1990-95 membership is the widespread dissatisfaction, amongst both laity and clergy in Synod, with the Church in its central role of providing moral guidance and meeting the spiritual needs of its members. Two-thirds of the laity and nearly half of the clergy said they were dissatisfied with the Church's answers to moral, social and family problems, as well as to spiritual needs. Only 40 per cent of the House of Bishops said they were satisfied. These figures — of arguably the best informed, most active Anglicans — are significantly worse than for the average churchgoer, who gives the Church an 80 per cent approval rating for meeting spiritual needs. What will concern Church leaders is the ageing profile of Synod lay members; between 1970 and 1995 the proportion of those under 40 fell by two thirds from 33 per cent to 8.4 per cent. Those over 60 now make up a third of the assembly running the Church. Women for the first time form a majority in the House of Laity (52 per cent). Synod is still over 90 per cent white, and over 80 per cent married. The survey — commissioned by General Synod, the Church's governing assembly — shows the privately-educated middle class maintaining their grip on the Church. The middle class dominates 60 per cent of congregations.

NHS managers admit pay error

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent
THE first health manager to attract criticism for his large pay increases today admits he must share responsibility for giving NHS management a bad name. Peter Griffiths, who was chief executive of the flagship Guy's hospital trust, in south London, says health managers have contributed to their own image problems by awarding themselves big rises and bonuses. "We have got ourselves a bad name not so much for setting a rate for the job, but for rewarding ourselves at an annual rate greater than the rest of the staff who have put in the same kind of effort," says Mr Griffiths. "In that sense, I criticise myself because it happened in my case at Guy's." Figures released yesterday show that the pay bill for NHS managers in England rose by more than 350 per cent from \$188.8 million in 1989-90 to \$723.3 million in 1994-95. A recent survey put the average total remuneration of trust chief executives at \$85,000. Mr Griffiths, who is now director of the King's Fund health management college and president of the Institute of Health Services Management, joined Guy's in 1991 from the Department of Health, where he was deputy NHS chief executive. Within weeks of gaining trust status, Guy's announced \$8.8 million cuts and hundreds of job losses. Mr Griffiths, however, became the highest paid NHS manager with a car for himself and one for his wife. In 1993, his total remuneration was \$103,000. Mr Griffiths' comments today come in a report — published by the National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts — highlighting the role of health managers and calling for an end to "manager bashing". Some managers agree they have caused problems for themselves. Alan Randall, chief executive of the Worthing and Southlands hospitals trust, West Sussex, says: "There are a few managers who seem to have abandoned the values of the NHS and the caring professions, who in a very ostentatious way display all the trappings of the high-powered executive. "It's a lifestyle in such stark contrast to what matters to many of the front-line staff, doing very unpleasant jobs for patients, that sometimes I think it's grounds for revolution within the NHS." The managers' overriding complaint, however, is that the complexity and responsibility of the job they do has never been recognised adequately. They accuse politicians of jumping on a bandwagon with their attacks on NHS "fat cats". *Managing to Care: Nihat, Birmingham Research Park, Vincent Drive, Birmingham B15 2SQ, £20 (£12 members)*

counter-rumour spread. Yet during the first few days of the trial, only the FT, the Guardian, the BBC and Channel 4 news allocated reporters on a full-time basis. Only when the case collapsed did others trickle in. The media had at last reacted to the about-face of the... Few newspapers or broadcasting organisations, with the exception of the BBC's Graham MacLellan, Channel 4 News, and the Guardian, found the ability to free up a specialist reporter who would follow the public hearings. According to Alan... and

The Guardian's coverage of the Scott Report on Friday will be unique and unrivalled. Don't take our word for it. Take The Independent's Independent, February 13, pp.16/17



MY FIRST BENEFIT CHEQUE

If you had an accident or developed a serious illness and had to stop working, would you be able to manage? Would you receive enough help from your employers, or the State? And what would happen to you if you didn't? After all, you still have to eat, even if you can't work. With a SafeGuard Income Protection plan from Norwich Union Healthcare however, you can be ready to deal with these problems. Because if the worst ever happens, it protects you against financial hardship. So all you'd have to worry about is getting better.

HIT ME HARDER THAN THE CAR.

FOR MORE DETAILS ON PROTECTING YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY... Please return coupon to: Norwich Union Healthcare Ltd., Chilworth House, Hampshire Corporate Park, Templars Way, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO53 3EY. Surname: First Name(s) and title: Address: Postcode: Tel: (day) STD: (evening) STD: Date of birth: Occupation: No one protects more. We may wish to pass on your data to other selected companies, who may then contact you. If you don't want this, please tick the box. SDU AD1

0800 400 123

'Shambles' alleged in Law Society

Claire Dyer
Legal Correspondent

THE Law Society, split into two camps since the election last summer of maverick president Martin Mears, was embroiled in a new controversy yesterday after a fellow council member launched a devastating attack on him in an "open letter" to the profession.

Eileen Pembridge, who was defeated for the presidency by Mr Mears, called him "seriously bad news for us all" in an article in *The Lawyer*, and called for a candidate to stand against him next summer, when he plans to seek a new term. She accused him and his vice-president, Robert Sayer, of turning the society's council meetings into a shambles, creating a climate of fear and distrust, and preventing reform through "arrogance and incompetence."

The society's governing council has had to organise a special meeting today after much of the last meeting was taken up with an angry attack by Mr Mears on the head of

public relations, Sue Stapley, and attempts by other council members to defend her. He questioned her motives in circulating a *Mail* on Sunday article accusing him of hypocrisy in his private life through the office cuttings service.

The Law Society staff say morale has slumped to an all-time low, with Mr Mears and Mr Sayer regarding many of them as enemies. Mr Sayer last month accused two senior staff members, Walter Merricks and Andrew Lockley, of "an absolute, blatant, arrogant attempt to sabotage" a paper he wrote suggesting ways of raising conveyancing fees.

Insiders say the election of Mr Mears and Mr Sayer, on a ticket to reform what many grassroots solicitors saw as a bloated bureaucracy indifferent to their concerns, was a salutary experience for the council. It took on board the message that it had to reform, but the pair's insistence on trying to bulldoze reforms through a system which works on consensus has led to a standstill.

Ms Pembridge said there was "a climate of fear and distrust" at the society's headquarters in central London.

Staff felt that "their time and efforts are wasted. It is increasingly difficult for them to undertake their jobs or keep their teams together. They are attacked by both Robert and Martin in the press and in letters to us."

Monthly council meetings at which decisions are taken "are now a shambles through lack of leadership and partisan intervention. Both posture from the podium, attacking council members and staff alike."

Mr Mears said: "It's the same old rubbish she was producing during the election. Wherever I go I am told I have more support than I did six months ago."



More than 1,000 firefighters from Avon and Derbyshire lined the route yesterday to Derby Cathedral to honour Fleur Lombard, the first British woman firefighter to die on service. Fleur, aged 21, a member of Blinewatch at Speedwell station, Bristol, died when the roof collapsed inside a Bristol supermarket where she was fighting a blaze. PHOTOGRAPH: DENIS THORPE

Man 'killed tormentor'

One-armed attacker endured 3 years of misery before snapping

David Ward

A ONE-armed man tormented for three years by gangs of youths snapped and killed a 14-year-old schoolboy with a knife, a court heard yesterday.

When he heard the boy had died, he is alleged to have told police: "I'm glad he's dead."

Leo Gavan, aged 36, of Huyton, Merseyside, appeared before Knowsley magistrates charged with the murder of Lee Kinch, also of Huyton, who died on Sunday. Reporting restrictions were lifted.

The court heard Mr Gavan's torment had begun

when he was moved into his second-floor flat by social workers three years ago.

His solicitor, Julian Linskill, said Mr Gavan, whose arm was amputated at the elbow when he was seven, said the flat, with no lock on the front door, was in a virtually abandoned block.

"Over the last three years my client's life has been made a misery for no other reason than his manifest handicap," said Mr Linskill. "Bricks have been repeatedly thrown through his window. His flat has been trashed following break-ins."

Mr Linskill said youths had posted burning rubbish

through his letter box and sprayed obscene graffiti about him on walls. He said Mr Gavan, who is unemployed, had thrown his TV set from his window on the night of the killing after stones had been hurled at him.

He added: "At the end of his tether, he grabbed a knife and left the flat to chase the youths, with, I'm afraid, tragic results."

He said Mr Gavan had separated from his wife eight years ago and had no contact with his three children.

Marie Carr, prosecuting, said youngsters had been throwing stones at the flat. Lee was not among them but he had been in the street when Mr Gavan appeared.

There was no bail application. A committal date was set for April 9.

Six convicted of gang-rape after police shield victims

SIX youths were ordered to be held in custody yesterday after being convicted of gang-raping two 15-year-old girls who for the past year have been protected by police after threats were made against them.

Judge Gerald Gordon asked for pre-sentence reports on the youths because of their ages, but told the Old Bailey bail would be "wholly inappropriate in the light of the material I have heard in court."

One of the gang's victims was taken to the basement of a block of flats where 14 teenage boys — some still at large — queued up to rape or attempted to rape her.

Her friend was kept in an area on the first floor where a smaller number of boys raped or molested her, said Michael Worsley QC, prosecuting.

Nine alleged members of the gang — five aged 16 and four aged 15 — were later arrested. The others have not yet been caught.

The nine had variously denied rape and attempted rape in Brixton, south London, on October 28, 1994. Two were acquitted of the charges last week and a third was cleared yesterday.

After the case, police said the two girls were now terrified to go out, because of the trauma they still suffered and fear of reprisals from friends of the attackers.

Police had to take special security measures to protect the girls after one was threatened she would be shot if she gave evidence at the trial.

"They have had to face real fear, threats and continued pressure for over a year," said PC Alison Pike, who helped to counsel the girls.

News in brief

Germany told to end ban on British beef

THE European Commission yesterday demanded that the German government act to end the ban on British beef imposed by three German states due to fears over mad-cow disease or BSE. The commission gave the federal government one month to ensure that the ban is lifted since it breached European Union laws on free movement of agricultural products, a commission spokesman said. Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia, and Rhineland-Palatinate last week blocked imports of British beef. A spokesman for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food welcomed the commission's move, saying that Britain has been pressing Brussels to act for some time. — Julie Wolf

Appeal to free editor

AMNESTY International last night called on the Home Office to either charge or release a Sikh newspaper editor who has been in prison for nearly a year facing deportation for unspecified reasons of "national security". Ragbir Singh Johal, who has lived in the West Midlands for the past 15 years, is claiming political asylum. In a report released today, the rights organisation said he risked being tortured or killed if sent to India. A Court of Appeal application for judicial review of the decision to deport him and the legality of his detention without charge or trial will be heard on Friday. — Owen Boucott

Contraception advice wanted

DOCTORS are not giving women the information they want about contraception, the Contraceptive Education Service reported today. A survey of 744 women aged 16 to 49 found that 40 per cent wanted to know more about possible side effects, and 24 per cent wanted to know more about health risks like thrombosis. More than 60 per cent of women questioned cited side effects as a key factor in their decision to stop using a previous method of contraception. Over half of former condom-users said the dissatisfaction of their partner had stopped them employing this method.

Writ served on Rifkind

THE Defence Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, a major general, a brigadier, and four other soldiers were yesterday served with a writ from a drummer in the Grenadier Guards claiming damages for assault, false imprisonment, and lack of medical care. Private Stephen Jordan, aged 23, was released from close arrest in December when lawyers obtained a writ of habeas corpus against the Ministry of Defence. He is expected to be court-martialled next month on charges of theft, and is now confined to Victoria barracks in Windsor. — Owen Boucott



Martin Mears: 'Climate of fear' claimed

Fax Transmission

To:

From:

My fax no:

Date: February 14th

Time:

Place:

Why not?



Lanson

Is someone chipping away at the deposit you're saving for a home

At the moment, you probably keep your savings in a Bank or Building Society account. It makes sense. Especially if you need money for everyday expenses, like bills or small purchases.

However, if you're saving for a house or flat over several years you might well be losing out. You see, the chances are that whenever you earn interest the taxman will take 20% or more. This can make a large hole in your savings.

With our new Savings Plan, though, you don't have to pay him a penny. If you're able to put aside a small amount each month you can now save in the same way as some of the wealthiest people in Britain.

For an information pack about stopping the removal of your savings, please give us a call.

Telephone: 0500 600 560
Call weekdays 8am - 8pm and Saturdays 9am - 2pm



As the plan is a PEP in value, including requested income, can fluctuate and is not guaranteed. Eagle Star Direct is an introducer only to Eagle Star Marketing Group members of which are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRC, for introducing clients for life assurance, pensions and unit trust business. Tax law is subject to changes which cannot be foreseen.

Handwritten signature or mark at the bottom of the page.

That's that as pop heart throbs confirm demise

Alex Bellis

TEENAGE girls and many gay men are facing a loveless Valentine's Day as they struggle to come to terms with the demise of their favourite heart throbs, Take That.

The Manchester foursome, the most successful British band of the decade, confirmed music industry rumour yesterday by saying that their next single, *How Deep Is Your Love*, will be their last.

Group member Gary Barlow, aged 25, broke the news at a press conference near Manchester airport.

He said: "Thanks for everybody's support in the last five years. You've been absolutely fantastic. Unfortunately the rumours are true. From today, it's no

more." Member Mark Owen, aged 24, added: "We do very much care about the fans, but we have done all we can do."

Take That's split has been on the cards ever since the departure last summer of its youngest member, Robbie Williams, aged 22. Owen, Jason Orange, aged 25, and Howard Donald, aged 27, appeared realistic about life after Take That. Asked if they might fade away, Owen said: "There's every chance of that."

Take That were five northern lads brought together five years ago by manager Nigel Martin Smith to emulate the success of US boy band New Kids On The Block. The band eventually had seven consecutive number one singles.



Take That, Manchester's riposte to US group New Kids on the Block, announcing at a press conference yesterday that they are splitting up

PHOTOGRAPH: RALF GROTHE

Gummer pressed to kill film theme park plans

Green-minded Tories oppose Labour peer's £225m project

Ian King

THE Environment Secretary, John Gummer, was under pressure last night to reject plans for a £225 million film theme park unveiled yesterday by the media group MAI, headed by Labour peer Lord Hollick, and the film company Warner Brothers.

The 150-acre complex planned for Hillingdon, West London, which would create up to 3,500 jobs, would be called Warner Brothers Movie World. The companies hope it would attract 2 million visitors from April to October each year, after opening in spring or summer 1998.

But Sir Michael Shersby, Tory MP for Uxbridge and president of the London Green Belt Council, said he would be asking Mr Gummer to veto the project.

"This huge development is entirely contrary to both the letter and the spirit of green

belt policy, which is intended to prevent further urban expansion around the built-up area of Greater London," Sir Michael said.

"It has become the symbol of the Government's desire to prevent the ruin of the countryside by excessive development. Any attempt to relax the rules must be prevented."

Richard Barnes, leader of the Conservative group on Labour-controlled Hillingdon borough council, said the prospect of 2 million people descending on the area filled him with "object horror".

The complex is expected to win planning permission, but a public inquiry is likely before the plan goes ahead.

Lord Hollick, who is overseeing MAI's £3 billion merger with Daily Express owner United News & Media, said the studio would provide a shot in the arm to the British film industry.



Lord Hollick... teamed up with Warner Bros

"The studios will also reinforce west London's concentration of specialist media skills and help to retain the nation's wealth of film and television-making talent."

Lord Hollick, who was chairman of Shepperton Studios in the late 1980s, denied that MAI was contributing to the Americanisation of British culture with the

theme park. "It will celebrate the best, the dearest in British film-making, and will feature a large number of entertainments featuring films made at Ealing, Shepperton, Pinewood and Elstree."

The park would have themed rides, shows based on Warner films and cartoons, including Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck and Superman, and exhibits celebrating the history of British films.

Its studios would be the first built from scratch in Britain since the second world war. Lord Hollick said projects would include a TV soap opera, which would keep the studios busy all year.

Warner and MAI have also set up a film production company.

Row over cancer link to power pylons

Owen Bowcott

CLAIMS that radioactive radon gas in the air may be the link between high-voltage pylons and an increased risk of cancer started fierce scientific controversy yesterday.

The row follows a study by a Bristol university team under Denis Henshaw, which proposed that radioactive radon naturally present in the atmosphere was attracted by electromagnetic fields in pylons and domestic electrical equipment.

His team's explanation linking electromagnetic fields and cancer was welcomed by

lawyers trying to sue electricity generating companies over childhood leukaemias.

But it was dismissed by the National Radiological Protection Board as "implausible".

The study, published in the International Journal of Radiation Biology, found electromagnetic fields activated the radon, known to be a cancer risk and increased the potential dosage to humans.

"Our findings potentially solve the enigma that there has been no convincing mechanism by which electromagnetic fields could affect any of the known developmental stages of cancers," Professor Henshaw said.

"They show such fields can

concentrate a whole cocktail of potential carcinogenic agents. We believe the fields are able to increase the quantity of such agents absorbed by the body."

Professor Henshaw, funded by the Medical Research Council, experimented using domestic wire plugged in to the mains in the basement of his home, and measured radioactive radon particles.

The board, whose studies have dismissed claims of a risk from living under high-voltage power lines, yesterday said: "The weight of evidence would suggest electric fields will, if anything, slightly reduce human exposure to radon." Electric fields

tended to deposit radon particles on surfaces and make them less likely to be inhaled. But the board did concede evidence for an "association" between electromagnetic fields and cancer.

Martin Day, a solicitor suing Norweb over the death from leukaemia of a boy from Bolton, welcomed the research, saying: "It's a major breakthrough."

The Leukaemia Research Fund also welcomed the findings, but added: "This does not prove that electromagnetic fields cause leukaemia — but it does point to the need for further investigation into the effects of electromagnetic fields and radon."

Met may hold biased officers liable after race case payout

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

A BLACK detective yesterday won an estimated £30,000 damages from the Metropolitan police for racial discrimination in a settlement which raises the possibility that individual officers who discriminate against colleagues could be personally liable for damages.

The force has decided that

if an officer has been on an equal opportunities training course he or she may be considered personally liable for any discriminatory actions. The Metropolitan Police Federation confirmed that it is having officers insured against such a possibility.

Detective Constable Peter Franklin and the Metropolitan Police reached agreement yesterday after he brought an action concerning his annual appraisal in 1992/93.

Mr Franklin, who was based at Epsom, Surrey, claimed he had been discriminated against and victimised because of his race. His complaint was withdrawn on payment of compensation.

Neither side would confirm the amount paid, but it is understood to be about £30,000. The Police Federation supported Mr Franklin, who has been in the service for 16 years, in his action.

Sir Paul Condon, Metropolitan Police commissioner, acknowledged in a statement that the appraisal was unfair and apologised for the distress caused. Mr Franklin was a "thoroughly professional and highly regarded officer and colleague".

Mike Bennett, chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation, said the situation facing supervisory officers when giving below-average appraisals to black or female officers now needed to be clarified.

Tomorrow may be too late to get some gas appliances checked.

CARBON MONOXIDE FROM FAULTY GAS APPLIANCES CAN KILL. THE CAUSE COULD BE AS SIMPLE AS A BLOCKED FLUE. THE OBVIOUS SIGNS ARE YELLOW FLAMES AND BROWN STAINING OR SOOTING OF THE APPLIANCE.

BY LAW, LANDLORDS MUST ARRANGE ANNUAL SAFETY CHECKS BY CORGI REGISTERED INSTALLERS OF THE APPLIANCES THEY OWN IN PROPERTY THEY LET.

ASK FOR PROOF - LANDLORDS ARE LEGALLY REQUIRED TO PROVIDE IT. CHECK NOW. OR TONIGHT IT COULD BE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW.

FOR MORE ADVICE, RING THE USE GAS SAFETY ADVICE LINE
0800 300 363

HSE
CORGI
GET THEM CHECKED
GAS APPLIANCES
KEEP THEM SAFE

The COOPERATIVE BANK

No annual fee. Ever.

Some banks charge as much as £12 a year for a credit card, and as much as £90 for a Gold Card. These Co-operative Bank Visa cards are guaranteed free for life. You will never be charged an annual fee. Think what that could save you over a lifetime. You don't even have to bank with us. You can transfer your existing balance from any other major credit card company at a special

discount rate of just 1% per month (12.6% APR variable). So, if you owe say £3,000 on a Barclays or NatWest Bank credit card you could save up to £290 over two years.* As for your credit limit, we guarantee to match what you currently have. (Our Gold Card carries a minimum £3,000 limit.) So call us free, and say goodbye to your annual fee.

Guaranteed free for life. 0800 34 64 94

Pay off your existing balance at 12.6% APR variable. Call free quoting reference no. 57390 or post the coupon

Save up to £290 on your debt.* Post to: Visa Card Dept., Co-operative Bank p.l.c., FREEPOST (MRB192), Manchester M1 9AZ or phone 0800 34 64 94 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Please use block capitals.

Keep your credit limit. Full name _____ Address _____

Gold Card limit £3,000 minimum. _____ Postcode _____ Phone number _____

Please tick card interested in Visa Card Gold Visa Card 57390

THE BANK MAY DECLINE ANY APPLICATION. CREDIT FACILITIES ARE SUBJECT TO STATUS AND NOT AVAILABLE TO FINANCIAL CUSTOMERS WHO MUST USE THE CARD AT LEAST 10 TIMES PER YEAR. WRITTEN QUOTATIONS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST. *TYPICAL EXAMPLE IS BASED ON A TRAFFIC BALANCE OF £2,000. THE BALANCE IS REPAYED IN FULL OVER A PERIOD OF 24 MONTHS AND PAYMENTS ARE MADE 25 DAYS AFTER STATEMENT DATE. BARCLAYS BANK VISA CARD @ 22.4% APR WOULD COST £495. NATWEST VISA CARD AT 21.4% APR WOULD COST £714. CO-OPERATIVE BANK CARDS: AT 12.6% APR WOULD COST £146. ALL RATES CORRECT AS AT 11.1.96.

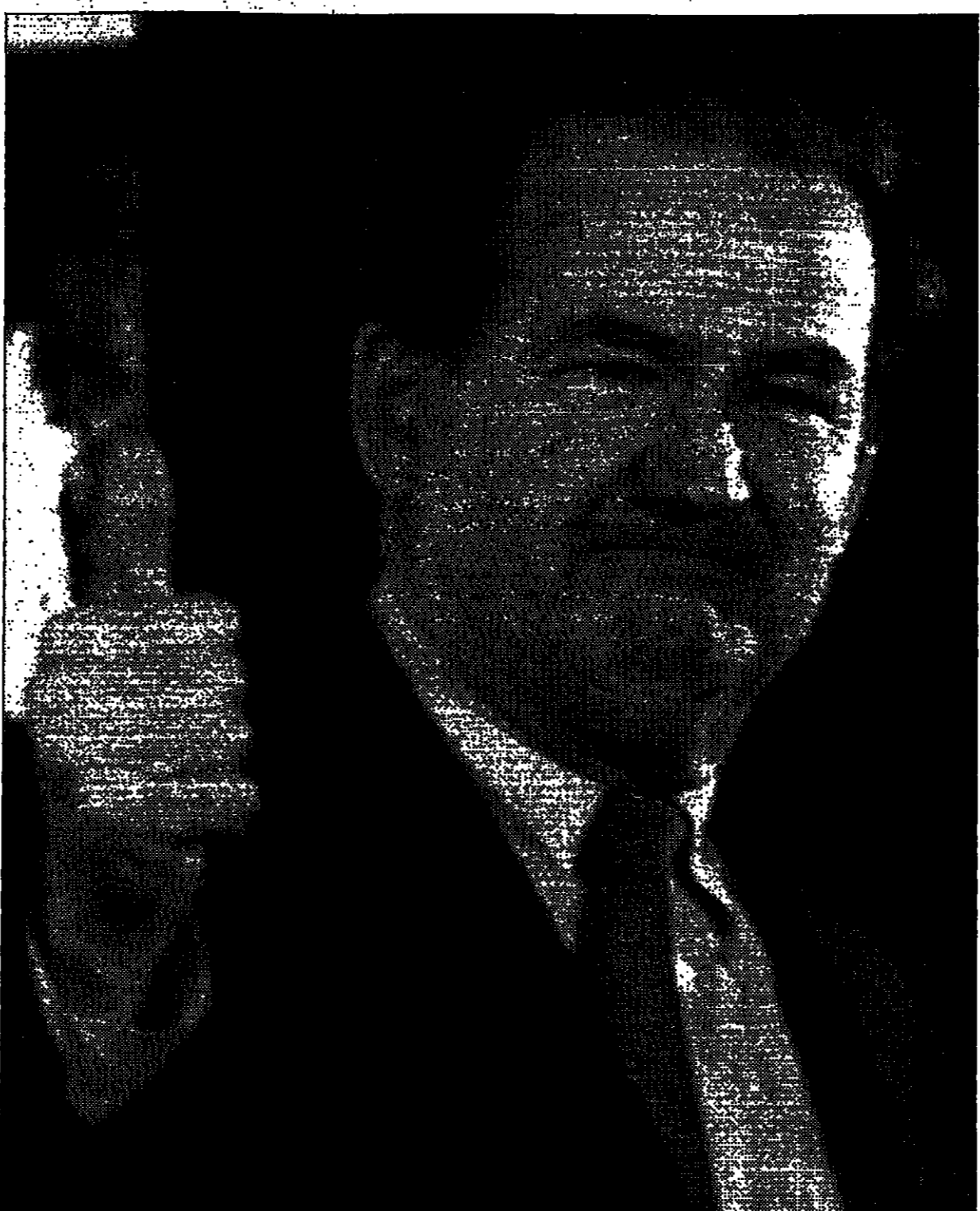
As the hero of the right surges through the primaries, regular Republicans are beginning to talk of Alexander



Humbling Dole gives Buchanan the Big Mo

In the end the charismatic rightwinger may prove too extreme for the Republicans, but he is writing their agenda, reports Jonathan Freedland in Des Moines

A EUPHORIC Pat Buchanan stormed into New Hampshire yesterday as the undisputed champion of the Republican right, fresh from his triumph in humbling the party's presidential front-runner Bob Dole in his own backyard. Mr Buchanan's stunning second place in Monday's Iowa caucuses, three points behind Mr Dole, gave him a mighty surge of momentum — the Big Mo in American political parlance — towards next Tuesday's showdown in New Hampshire. The victory is tremendous, my friends," he told ecstatic supporters. "We are going to win this nomination." The result left Mr Dole the official winner but looking deeply vulnerable. By scoring just 26 per cent in what is all but home ground — he comes from neighbouring Kansas — the Senate majority leader raised new fear about his viability as the party's challenger to Bill Clinton in November. Perhaps the greatest cause of alarm in the Dole camp was the unexpectedly strong showing of the former candidate nor of Tennessee Lamar Alexander, who took third place with 18 per cent. That means Mr Dole now faces challenges from both left and right, Mr Alexander wooing Republican moderates while Mr Buchanan wins over ultra-conservatives. The multi-millionaire publisher Steve Forbes cancelled a day of campaigning in New Hampshire yesterday to huddle with advisors and draw up a new strategy. His blitzkrieg of negative television advertising caused a backlash by Iowa voters, who confounded pollsters and rewarded him with 10 per cent and fourth place. Few were ready to discount him altogether, however. With unlimited funds, he can keep running indefinitely — and New Hampshire's historic allegiance to taxation should make his call for a flat tax appealing in that state. Polls before the Iowa contest showed him tied with Mr Dole in New Hampshire. But yesterday belonged to Pat Buchanan. The charismatic television commentator and one-time Nixon speechwriter, who staged an effective run as a protest candidate against President George



Thumb signs in Iowa... Bob Dole, left, Pat Buchanan, above, and Lamar Alexander greet their supporters as the results of the state Republican caucuses come in

Bush in 1992, can now claim to be the true conservative in the 1996 race. With much less money than his rivals, and few organisational roots in Iowa, he nevertheless succeeded in uniting evangelical voters — a mighty force in Iowa — behind his anti-abortion, anti-gay-rights message. Until last week the Christian right's support was split between Mr Buchanan, Mr Dole and Senator Phil Gramm of Texas. But Mr Gramm's followers deserted him after he unexpectedly lost to Mr Buchanan in a mid-campaign in Louisiana, an event staged solely to create a Gramm vic-

tory. After his 9 per cent poll in Iowa, Mr Gramm's campaign is now in an advanced stage of meltdown. "Gramm's dead," said one Republican. Mr Buchanan was supported by 41 per cent of Christian Republicans, who accounted for nearly half the Iowa turnout. They filed into churches, bars and living rooms throughout the state to meet in small groups, talk politics and cast their vote. "We have a real chance to go back to what America was, to what the founding fathers wanted it to be," said an impassioned Larry Smith at a meeting of the Des Moines 66 precinct. He told a room full of his neighbours that he was backing Mr Buchanan because "he is a moral man". But the rightwing firebrand appeals to more than Christian fundamentalists. He touches a nerve in blue-collar audiences, drawn by his promise to stand up for "the little guy" against "the fat cats on Wall Street" who ship American jobs abroad in pursuit of cheaper wages. His success in Iowa is all the more remarkable in that his protectionist message was thought likely to alienate the state's farmers, who depend on exports. But exit polls showed that poorer voters



ABC may spell victory for Lamar

Jonathan Freedland in Des Moines, Iowa

BOB DOLE won a fire-and-brimstone right-winger called Pat came second and in third place was an affable chap who few believed could make it to the White House. That was the outcome of the Iowa caucuses in 1988. With an uncanny sense of déjà vu, it was also the result on Monday night. Except this time the far-right candidate was not televangelist Pat Robertson but Pat Buchanan, and the number three spot went not to Vice-President George Bush, but the former governor of Tennessee, Lamar Alexander. The Clinton White House certainly fears him, perhaps more than any other candidate. As a former southern governor, he matches the president but can also make the coveted boast of being a political "outsider". His message of devolving power out from Washington to the 50 states is in tune with the current US mood, and yet he is not too associated with the excesses of Newt Gingrich's so-called Republican Revolution on Capitol Hill. The Alexander victory scenario envisages a wounded Bob Dole taking further hits from a surging Pat Buchanan. A few more Iowa-style weak showings would prompt a switch of moderates away from Mr Dole, forcing him out of the race by March. That would leave a straight fight between Mr Alexander and an unelectable Mr Buchanan, and the nomination would be within reach. But there are pitfalls ahead. Moderates are not as strong in New Hampshire, and Mr Alexander's Mr Nice Guy image could soon crumble as the US media prepares to take its first hard look at the candidate over the coming days. So far they have given him a free ride. The chief problem could be Lamar Alexander himself. He is charming and presidential, but hardly an inspirational leader. Mind you, nor was George Bush. And he won.

French army to be cut by half

Paul Webster in Paris

THE French army is to be almost halved under a plan which President Jacques Chirac will outline to his defence council next week. His military planners have recommended scrapping the main French input to the Eurocorps and sharply reducing the military presence in Africa. The council will meet on Wednesday to discuss disbanding more than 100 regiments at home and abroad, including the 14 which make up the first armoured division, France's contribution to the Eurocorps. The 21,000-strong contingent's withdrawal from Germany could lead to the unpopularity of the Eurocorps, which has been the foundation of joint European defence policy. Only about 80 regiments are expected to survive the cuts, which will be outlined to parliament next month for debate in June. The total strength could be reduced from 240,000 men and women to 130,000. The timetable has yet to be revealed. Since the Gaullist party draws much of its traditional electorate from the army, the reforms are certain to cause an uproar and split rightwing parties. With only two years before the general election is due, the political risks will be increased by proposals to close up to 150 barracks, many of them in towns where the army provides most of the jobs and supports local business. The effect would be felt most in eastern and southern France, two of the worst areas of unemployment. Jobs are already threatened by proposals to reduce orders for armaments and naval equipment. The reforms presage a fundamental change in national thinking in preparation for an all-professional army. A reduction in its strength would mark the end of con-

Russian airfield plays willing host to former enemies

David Fairhall in Savostleyka reports on an arms inspection in a new era of trust

THE 54th fighter aviation regiment had only six hours' notice yesterday that its airfield, in a frozen forest 200 miles east of Moscow, was required for the first time to host a team of British arms control inspectors. Like all proper military occasions, this one began with the briefing, at which the Russian base commander formally acknowledged the existence of the OIAs, declared with its aircraft under the 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty at a precise latitude and longitude. Maps were compared, delegations introduced. Then out on to the snow-covered runway, where the

British team's second-in-command, Major Margaret Roberts — flanked by furore-hatted escort officers — processed down a line of SU-27 air defence fighters to take her inventory. More than 50,000 aircraft, armoured vehicles and guns have been destroyed by Nato and the former Warsaw Pact since the epoch-making treaty came into force. The residual armories are now being meticulously checked. Russia's overall numerical compliance is not in doubt, though there is diplomatic argument about its refusal to remove sufficient forces from the Caucasus — at least until the Chechen crisis is over. Maj Roberts had come to make doubly sure, recording not just the symbols painted on the SU-27s' tail fins, but even the serial number riveted inside the wheel bays. And since this is the first time Moscow has allowed the media to cover such an inspection, she also had to fend off questions from a Sky television reporter about whether the Russians took her seriously even though she was a woman. If they did not, the fur hats showed no sign of it. Every protocol was observed. The hospitality was elaborate and friendly. Base commander Major-General Gennady Mukhamedyarov, a veteran of the former Soviet air forces in East Germany, said it was important to show that all the declared information was correct. It was a matter of trust, he said, now that former enemies had become more like colleagues. While Maj Roberts was counting aircraft on the runway, her boss, Lieutenant Colonel Henk de Jager, toured the rest of the base.

where the Russians rear their own pork. "It's not that we expect to find anything wrong," Col de Jager explained. "It's a matter of exercising our rights and being consistent — otherwise, when you come back in three years' time, they'll say: 'Why are you so suspicious?'" Savostleyka is a self-contained community, rather like a big United States base in Britain, but the countryside here is forested and alive with elk, wild boar and the occasional wolf — or so the Russians say. In addition to the 54th regiment it houses a flight training centre teaching pilots to fly the SU-27, the most powerful Russian fighter aircraft, which has just been sold to China for licensed production there. The British team flew in from Scampton in Lincolnshire, where a tri-service arms-control group is responsible for mounting inspections and hosting similar short-notice visits from other CFE treaty signatories. On this trip there are also guest inspectors from France and Norway. Under the treaty rules, the Russians had no idea which Scampton team landed at Moscow airport. Unlike some of the early American inspectors, Col de Jager did not insist on every letter of the law. "We're doing more than count equipment," he said. "We're trying to build a relationship." As it happens, the symbol of the Savostleyka base is George and the Dragon, which it shares with Moscow and England.

TV imports battle looms

Stephen Bates in Strasbourg

CLASH over the number of imports of American television programmes allowed into Europe is likely to pit the European Parliament against member governments today. MEPs are to vote on imposing much tighter controls across a range of media to protect European culture and broadcasters. The move is spearheaded by an alliance including British Labour MEPs and is supported by film trade unions and writers' organisations. If successful, it would bring the parliament into conflict with both the European Commission and the Council of Ministers, which regard quotas as impractical and counter-productive. France is pressing ahead with quotas restricting English language songs on radio stations, despite protests from disc jockeys, but other member states say they will not accept any attempt by

the parliament to impose quotas on domestic channels. Attempts by the French to stiffen quotas to preserve European — and specifically their own — culture were headed off by governments led by Britain and Germany last year. Film and television associations have warned MEPs of a consumer backlash if there is any attempt to restrict what the public can watch and of dire problems for the growing audio-visual sector. The industry says restrictions would be impossible to enforce. There have even been grave warnings that the British predilection for imported television soaps such as the Australian-produced Neighbours could be put at risk, although in fact the BBC and ITV already meet the guidelines proposed by the parliament. Carole Tongue, the Labour MEP for London East and the party's media spokesperson, said: "This is about ensuring Britain benefits from an expanding television industry. We want television programmes like Eastenders, Spender and Pride and Prejudice, which mirror our culture and identity, as well as our favourite US imports, which will be good news for jobs, business and British creative talent." The proposers of the measures argue that there is a deficit estimated at \$3.7 billion a year between European and US film and television imports. Eighty per cent of films shown in Europe are US-made. The proposals would enforce a 51 per cent minimum quota of European-produced material on all television channels and the global computer network. Opponents of quotas argue that restrictions would be difficult to enforce on satellite broadcasters. Some Wade, secretary general of the Association of Commercial Television in Europe, said: "This is a totally outdated response. Protectionism will not resolve the issue." Tory MEPs are to vote against the proposals.

News in brief

Libya firm on Lockerbie Libya's General People's Congress reiterated yesterday that Tripoli would not hand over two of its citizens wanted in the West in connection with the Lockerbie bombing which killed 270 people. The congress, formally Libya's top decision-making body, urged states to ignore United Nations sanctions imposed on Libya's refusal to hand over the suspects. — Reuters.

Havel surgery The Czech president, Vaclav Havel, underwent urgent surgery yesterday after a polyp in his mouth started bleeding. Czech news agency CTK said. — Reuters.

Army avarice Zimbabwe's army commander admitted yesterday that President Robert Mugabe permitted him to buy farms, shops and a hotel despite rules barring public officials from becoming rich. General Solomon Mujuru, testifying in his defamation trial against a magazine that had reported on his businesses, also said he was angered by the magazine that he wanted to shoot dead its white journalists. — AP.

Karen peace move The last big ethnic rebel group resisting control by Burma's military dictatorship plans to hold peace talks today in Rangoon. — AP.

Polish coal strike Miners at about a third of Poland's coalmines stopped coal deliveries yesterday, stepping up a two-week-long pay protest. A Solidarity trade union spokesman said. — Reuters.

Mexico pact near Mexican officials and Zapatista rebels yesterday restarted peace talks expected to produce the first formal accord since the uprising in southern states of Chiapas two years ago. — Reuters.

Fela freed Nigerian Afro-beat superstar Fela Anikulapo-Kuti has been freed from detention after his arrest last week for being involved with drugs. — Reuters.

▶ Their argument seems to be that royalty is simultaneously too important and too utterly trifling to be subjected to the usual processes of political debate or democratic agitation.
Francis Wheen

G2 page 7

Reaping division in Iowa
Dole's poor result leaves the field wide open

BOB DOLE'S conservative common-sense has been knocked silly in the Iowa primary where the result upset all predictions except that he would do less well than last time.

cent of Republicans when he challenged George Bush. His success in Iowa might rekindle some of that support.

Lights and cameras. More action!
Britain's film industry would do even better with financial help

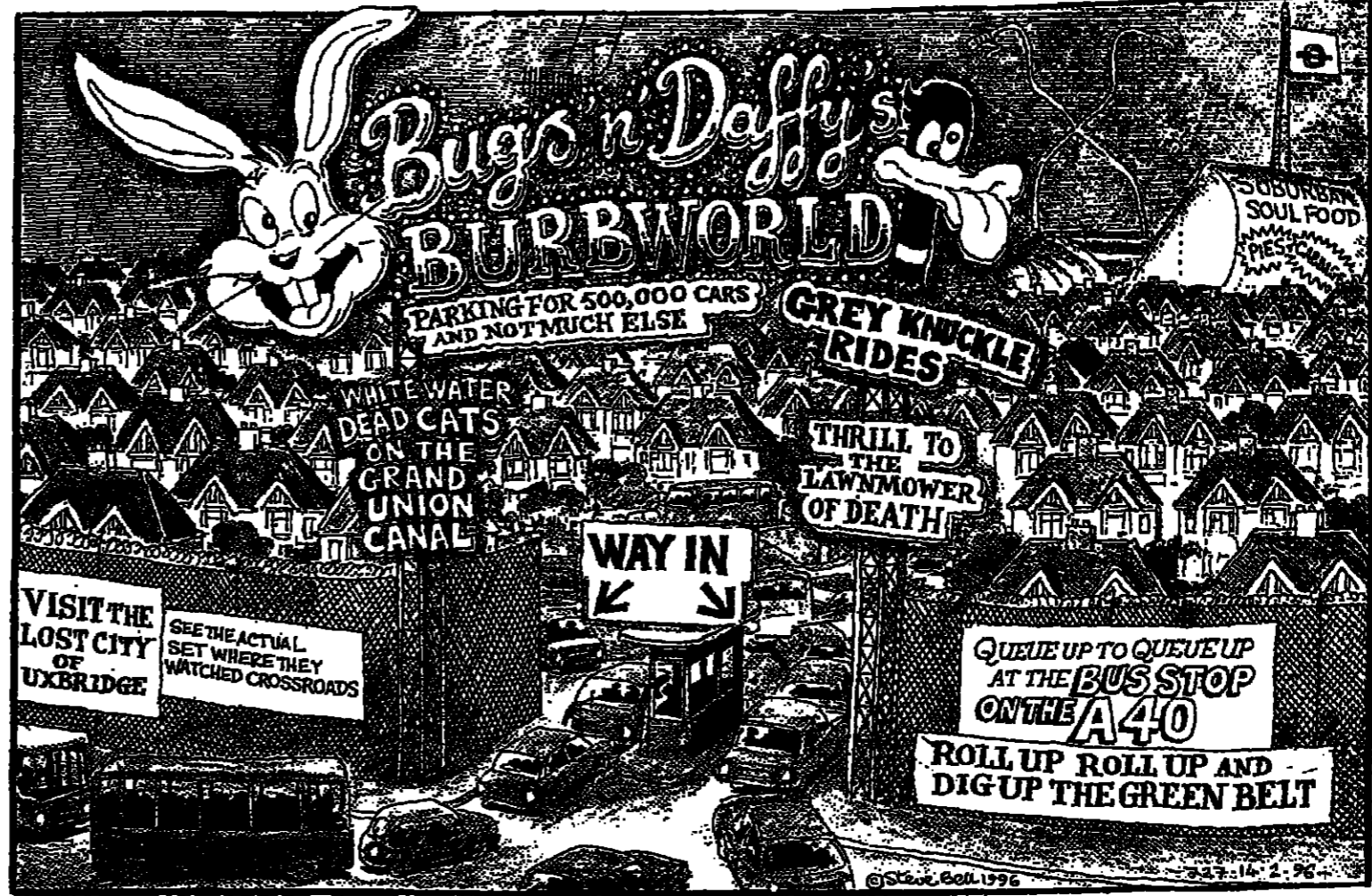
BRITAIN'S film industry appears to be enjoying a mini-renaissance while still being deprived of the government support deemed essential for survival.

exchange rate, the level of wages and the scent of an indigenous film revival.

Securing the security guards
Private firms need to be licensed and made accountable

SO just who is being the villain's friend? Police estimates suggest up to 2,600 crimes a year are being committed by employees of private security firms.

onstrations, have a lax recruitment policy. His references were not taken up before he started work.



Letters to the Editor

An 1,800-page missile

THE imminent publication of the Scott report promises to be a debacle of the highest order.

dropping chemical weapons and worth about £300 million.

and the massive subsidy supporting the arms-export trade? This is mainly through the Defence Export Services Organisation and the Export Credit Guarantee Department.

A search through the wreckage for any clues to a solution

ARTHUR Aughey's appeal to "democracy" in support of David Trimble's election proposals is disingenuous.

valued these doys more than anything else. After all, if it is for material gain, this government knows too much about the obnoxious people as the Scott report has been caused by majoritarian "democracy" within the sectarian Northern Ireland framework.

Broadcast news

YOU report (Media moguls in shake-out, February 9) that the ITC has given the green light to the merger between MAI and United Newspapers.



An old hand at keeping young

MY LIMITED knowledge of cosmetic surgery leads me to believe that one of the few areas of the human body that cannot be improved upon is the hand.

sionate, but Joan is upstaged, February 9? How does she keep looking so young — hands apart I think we should be told.

Streets apart

MICHAEL Howard says some "mature people" may wish to join the probation service but are put off because of the need to do a two-year course.

Licence to kill

A WOMAN is sent to prison for not paying her TV licence (The poor laws, February 9). My daughter Kate was knocked down on a pedestrian crossing in Bristol.

A Country Diary

THE WREKIN: It's been a while since I managed to snatch enough time to get to the top of the Wrekin.

I AM surprised and disappointed that the Guardian's editorial (February 10) has joined the "whitewashers" of John Major and the Government in the latest IRA bombing outrage.

PLEASE include a full postal address, even an e-mailed letter, and a telephone number. We may edit letters where names are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

سكنا من الاصل

Diary
Matthew Norman

MYSTERY surrounds the presence at the Finance Bill Standing Committee of my old friend David Hunt. Former cabinet ministers — let alone those who resigned office to make money — do not allow themselves to be drafted on to such soporific committees, to spend long hours examining the minutiae of the Budget. And yet there sits Mr Hunt, unpaid and silently attentive, while he could be at his law firm. What an altruistic fellow he is. Or is he? Could this be John Major's insurance policy against William Waldegrave resigning as Chief Secretary over the Scott report? It would be splendidly convenient to replace him with someone who had attended the committee since it first sat in January, someone up to speed on the fine detail and thus able to open the Bill for the Government in the Commons. The trustworthiness of David Hunt would be perfect in a crisis. So is that why he sits so quietly? No, it cannot be. For the Prime Minister has promised to stand by Mr Waldegrave, and his vote of confidence (no more than that of Aston Villa FC's chairman, Mr Doug Ellis) is not to be treated lightly.

WILLIAM Wallace writes from Waddington, Lincoln, to criticise me for being too gentle to my old friend Lord Wyatt of Weeford — a failing, if failing it be, for which I will never apologise. In referring to Woody's House of Lords oration about Sky Sport, I did not "express the full substance of the speech, the laudatory references to Rupert Murdoch or the way he steadily lost the sympathy of the house". A glance at the interventions in Hansard, and on our own Arena page, does suggest that no Lords were losing patience with the old boy, while his own remarks about Mr Murdoch ("He is envied because he is successful," etc), who pays him over £200,000 per annum for columns, are flattering. However — and it's a big however — I will counterbalance my suggestion that Lord Wyatt's thinking was influenced by this relationship. Shame on you, William Wallace, for speaking so of the Diary's friend.

THE Contraceptive Education Service launches an initiative on sexual health care and contraception in Soho today — and spearheading the launch is... Dr Hilary Jones. Make it up, could you? Indeed, you most certainly could not.

MY FRIEND Ann Widdecombe unleashes against the exquisite sense of self-parody which has made her so well-loved. At the prison service's annual convention in Brighton, Miss Widdecombe explained why the Government was no closer to choosing Derek Lewis's successor, and invited questions from the floor. There were none. "It's all right," said Miss Widdecombe, attempting a winning smile. "I'm not really Doris Karloff."

JIM McGillivray, the ref who sent off Partick Thistle's Steve Pittman three times, even though the defender wasn't playing, is to become a worldwide star. Radio journalist Dermot Rendon has made a World Service feature about that fabled match, although it concerns a different incident. On leaving the pitch at half time, Mr Pittman's teammate, Rod McDonald, an observant Catholic, crossed himself as usual as he entered the players' tunnel — and Mr McGillivray instantly booked him for crowd incitement. As for the dog mentioned yesterday — the one that was thrown by a Rangers fan at a Celtic supporter singing on a bus — his name is Dougal, and he's a Jack Russell terrier. We cannot be too zealous in our search for all the facts.

THE Docklands Digest magazine for January and February has been faxed to me. The front-page headline is laid out as follows: "Work... Live... Boom".



Democrats shout out the R-words

Commentary Will Hutton

IT HAS become part of today's political vocabulary that the right has all the ideas, and the left is on the near permanent defensive — guardian of the outmoded concepts of social inclusion, equality and fairness. Nowhere is this more true than in the United States — and whether it is the rise of the religious right or the advocates of flat-rate taxes, this seems to be where the centre of political energy lies.

Yet the worm is turning. What is remarkable about the current US political scene is not the ascendancy of the Republicans, but their difficulty in identifying a unifying candidate who might dislodge such an evidently flawed president. Pat Buchanan, arch-conservative, may have come a close second to Bob Dole in the Iowa presidential nomination caucus on Monday, but it was the liberal moderate Lamar Alexander who came third. Fiery anti-state rhetoric is beginning to sound wearying. The Democrats have begun

to sense the change in mood, and even, after the recent victory in Oregon for the Senate, a renaissance in their political fortunes. Stung by Newt Gingrich's landslide in the Congressional elections 15 months ago, there has been an urgent reappraisal of policy options — and growing confidence that the intellectual tide is swinging their way.

At the end of this month, a new big policy idea is to be launched, and already Democrats ranging from the liberal wing, like Ted Kennedy, to centrists, like David Bonior, are making speeches to soften up opinion. And what is the big idea? Nothing more or less than the stakeholder economy: the solution to low wages and growing insecurity alike. The Democrats plan to sell it hard. This is the elixir, a growing number feel, that could win them the 1996 elections.

Early drafts of the 80-page document are circulating in Washington, and one is in the possession of the Guardian. The core ideas are a "drastic" rewriting of the American tax code, an anti-speculation tax, and a massive re-organisation of the regulatory regime to create "truly responsible corporate and financial-market behaviour". This will be enacted in a Responsible Business Charter Act to allow for the creation of new socially responsible firms (R-Corps) and socially responsible investment funds (R-Funds). Here are the instruments to reinvigorate the US economy and reverse falling real wages, the Democrats believe, and at last offer hope for their natural constituency — the blue-collar workforce.

The report does not pussy-foot around. Drawing on the massive work done by the Competitiveness Policy Council, established in 1986 to report to the President and Congress on how to improve American competitiveness, and whose members include leading industrialists, financiers and trade unionists, it asserts baldly that the US economy is suffering from corporations under acute pressure from their institutional shareholders to achieve among the highest financial returns in the world. The arrival of new technologies and intense competition from Third World countries has ratcheted up the pressure, but American companies have not responded by taking "the high road" of higher investment and real wages. Compelled to fend off takeover from predators on Wall Street by maintaining a high share price and therefore high short-term profits, they have instead bid down real wages, exported jobs to low-cost countries and adopted an ever more aggressive hire-and-fire policy towards their workers. The result has been the collapse of the American dream.

THE R-Corps would only qualify for privileged status if they met a number of criteria. They would have to invest and train more, offer stock ownership, health and pension plans to their workforces, recognise unions, offer 90 days' notice of redundancy, respect the environment, and be headquartered in countries which offered a minimum wage and banned child, military and prison labour for commercial purposes. There would even be incentives to become members of self-policing industry associations.

Concerned that the churning of company securities and growth of takeovers is discouraging long-term corporate decision-making and deterring investment, the Task

Force document also proposes a raft of tax and regulatory measures to stabilise company-ownership patterns. Company managements need better monitoring by their shareholders, dividend pay-outs and share buy-backs need to be reduced, and investment in R&D and plant and machinery increased.

The most eye-catching proposal is a 0.5 per cent transactions tax to be levied on every share purchase by every form of investor, but reclaimable in tranches after the stock has been held for more than two years. But there are measures to encourage "private investment pools" — groups of investors committed to individual companies and who will stand by them.

Blair's honest ambition is open to doubt



David McKie

THERE are millions of words in the Scott report, few of them known to me. But one ingredient which those who attended the Scott inquiry will confidently expect is a declaration of faith in the virtues of open government, not just as a moral principle or adjunct of true democracy, but as positively therapeutic for our system of government. Some of the words which will be used with that cast of mind which believes in being economical with the truth, or asserts that half the picture can sometimes be true, seemed all but uncontrollable.

To some civil servants, this addition to open dealing is a fatal delusion which will menace efficient government. Scott and his accomplice, Baxendale, simply don't understand. With not the slightest experience of working in government, they presume to lecture the professionals on how they should go to work. "Governments," wrote the former minister Tristan Garel-Jones in last week's Sunday Telegraph, "need a carefully defined area of confidentiality in order to function properly. Confidentiality, secrecy, is not a device to cover up improperly but a framework which enables frank advice, full debate and deliberate consideration to take place..."

If senior Tories, confirmed in that view by their own experience, talk at the Scott prescription, what about Labour? Here is a party unservedly pledged to open government. Tony Blair's constitutional lecture last week reaffirmed the party's commitment to a Freedom of Information Act. That, civil servants will reasonably tell you, reflects inexperience. Few of the likely Blair cabinet have served at any level in government. To them, as to Scott, it is terra incognita. When they get into power and experience its difficulties, their faith in open procedures will falter. They'll begin to see that open government and efficient government are frequently incompatible. But, by then, it will be too late...

Unlike devaluation or reform of the Lords, the promise of open government is one which people assume Tony Blair could deliver without too much trouble. But could he? Blair's own career hardly demonstrates a belief that crucial decisions are best made openly, on the basis of consultation and unfettered debate. As employment spokesman,

his decision to break the old Labour commitment to the closed shop was taken on the basis of subtle negotiation with key players, from which the wider world was excluded. The decision to ditch Clause 4 was taken in a close elite circle with even the deputy leader let into the secret late in the day; and made public in such a way that much of Blair's party-conference audience didn't realise for a while quite what he was up to.

Little scope is permitted to dissent (see the curbing of Clare Short for reasserting a long-established personal view on cannabis, or the fear of public debate on monarchy versus republic.) The Harman affair was only the latest of a series of incidents revealing a high-spin-doctor culture at work. A slump in the polls would be likely to follow, it was whispered. But this would not be the fault of Harriet Harman: the blame would be long to those who'd disloyally shared their misgivings with the hungry media. Meanwhile, reporters ringing local party chairmen to get reactions found they'd been warned not to talk.

All that is understandable. It's true that punters don't like the sight of party divisions. Stucco divisions are inevitable, they need to be hidden. But already in this reaction you see how hard it will be to maintain the commitment to openness once Labour is in government. Even open opposition is tough; open government, as poll ratings slump and the area of confidentiality in order to function properly Confidentiality, secrecy, is not a device to cover up improperly but a framework which enables frank advice, full debate and deliberate consideration to take place...

THIS is not a subject for fundamentalism. Total consultation on every thing produces total inertia. There are delicate initiatives in government which openness, honesty even, would wreck (the early stages, for instance, of the Irish peace process). Even journalists know this — as is evident from the secrecy with which newspapers handle their own affairs. There has to be a balance. But in Britain, the balance is tilted too far in the other direction, towards secrecy and fences-off.

A small, fenced-off clique, even powered by All Souls Intelligence, is no guarantee of effective government. That was what gave us the poll tax. And the kind of shameless cheating exemplified in the Government's arrangements for the publication of Scott — so hauntingly reminiscent of the practices which the judge was asked to investigate — is always, in the end, counter-productive. But such things are deep in the culture which Blair will inherit. Will he have the commitment and courage — sustained even in extremis, and despite the wheedlings of spin doctors — to break with them?



Claws are out

With nationalism matching economic growth among the Asian tigers, Andrew Higgins warns that war may become a reality

UNDER an elevated motorway in central Taipei, a vicious war rages between Taiwan and China. It is a titanic conflict, the outcome of which will determine not only the future shape of Asia but the balance of world power for the next century.

Casualties are high as Taiwan's high-tech military resists the sledgehammer blows of a three-million-strong People's Liberation Army (PLA). Computer screens flash data of catastrophic destruction — planes shot down, warships sunk, cities annihilated.

And so, day after day in the Guanghua Computer Market, unfolds a virtual war that, though few in Taiwan like to think about it much, suddenly shows distressing signs of one day becoming reality.

When programmers first devised Battle In The Taiwan Strait, a computer game simulating a Chinese seaborne invasion, an attack by the PLA seemed as detached from reality as Dungeons And Dragons. The attraction of the game —

spotlighted the central issue. Tension in the Taiwan Strait is not just a quarrel between China and Taiwan but part of a broader security crisis facing Asia as a whole. Instead of leading to a golden age of commerce and harmony, the mantra of a phoney Confucianism currently in vogue — Asia's extraordinary economic growth has at best masked, not purged, old territorial and ethnic conflicts. And, in the case of China, the region's historical and almost certainly future colossus, growing prosperity provides the means to procure and project military power in a way not seen since its humiliation by British gunships a century and a half ago.

Clauseswits is outflanking Confucius across the region. Consensus, hailed as the linchpin of Asian values and security, is giving way to confrontation as the confidence created by economic achievement fuels a newly assertive sense of national pride.

The passions that swept across Asia after the second world war and forced Britain and France to shut down their empires, with the exception of Hong Kong, are again on the loose. "We are seeing a second wave of nationalism," says James Tang, of Hong Kong University. Asian countries feel they are stuck in a second league and not properly recognised as major players. Economic prosperity facilitates greater confidence, and this leads to more and more assertiveness in international affairs.

SAINSBURY'S
PRODUCT RECALL
IMPORTANT
SAFETY NOTICE
SAINSBURY'S BABY CARE BABY LOTION
300ml · 500ml · 750ml · All codes

We have identified a quality fault which affects the consistency of Sainsbury's Baby Lotion. This is sold in the above three sizes. As a precautionary measure we ask customers who have purchased this product to stop using it and to return it to their nearest Sainsbury's supermarket or Savacentre hypermarket for a full refund.

We apologise to our customers for the inconvenience that this may cause.

Customers can be assured that no other products in the Sainsbury's Baby Care range, including Sainsbury's Baby Lotion for Sensitive Skins, are affected.

If you have any queries, please call our Customer Service Helpline on 0800 636262.

14th February 1996. J Sainsbury plc.

Martin Balsam



Unhinged... Martin Balsam, scene-stealer as a crazed army officer in Catch-22

PHOTOGRAPH: KOBAL

Regular guy on screen

MARTIN Balsam, who has died aged 76 while holidaying in Rome, had the kind of commonplace looks one would not give a second glance to in the street or on the subway, but which held one absorbed on screen.

After serving in the army as a combat engineer and in the air force, he gained valuable acting experience with various touring companies, and played a murderer in Macbeth, Michael Redgrave's New York debut in 1948.

He held him forever in the mind of audiences as Milton Arbogast, the private detective who meets a chilling end when sent to snoop around the Bates Motel in Psycho (1960).

work, either on TV or film. In the 1980s, he played the Jewish business partner of the American Aik Garnet (Carroll O'Connor) in Archie Bunker's Place, and was a Sicilian mafioso in La Piovra (The Octopus), one of the most popular Italian TV series.



Adolf Galland... scored 103 'kills'

Adolf Galland

Hitler's fighter ace

ADOLF Galland, who has died at the age of 83, was the wartime Luftwaffe's most senior fighter pilot; a veteran of the Battle of Britain who became one of the select band of German war heroes admired by their British enemy.

June 1941. In November, when Werner Mölders, the only German before Galland to win the Knight's Cross with Oak-leaves, Swords and Diamonds, was killed in an air crash, Galland succeeded him as Inspector of Fighters.

Göring and Hitler led to two hours which Galland bitterly but vainly opposed.

He then transferred to the Richthofen Fighter Group — named after Germany's leading ace of the first world war — and volunteered to fight for Franco in Spain. In the course of 300 missions he developed the advanced ground-support tactics which would be devastatingly applied in the Blitzkrieg years of 1939-41.

As the Allied bomber onslaught mounted from 1942, Galland's fighters were increasingly overstretched. Strategic incomprehension by

Post-war he went to Argentina as an adviser to Peron's air force before returning to West Germany as an aviation consultant. He published his memoirs, The First And The Last, in German and English, in the fifties.

Jackdaw



Love lines

Q. HOW DO I write a love poem? A. The first thing to acquire would be a rhyming dictionary... You don't want to palm off lines like 'Come live with me and be my love' or 'Go, lovely rose' as if they were your own, in case your loved one was an English major...

larise every birthmark on your beloved's backside or include her middle name if it's a long one. On the other hand, don't make the poem so general she thinks this could be a generic poem you use on everybody... You need only her, remember. Go easy on the irony and classical allusions, in the high-17th-century manner, those poets were functioning in a culture more print literate than ours.

Office code

MEMO: To all employees. FROM: Human Resources. RE: Revised Corporate Dress Code. In view of the enthusiastic response to our "Casual" Friday policy, we are instituting four new wardrobe categories, one for each day of the week, effective immediately. They are: 1. "Downtown" Monday.

Little brother

LIKE A thousand insect-eyes glimmering in shadow, they are watching you. Not Big Brother, quite. Rather, a horde of little brothers gathering scraps of data — each of these, in itself, harmless and dull. Note the bar-code on our front cover, which, combined with a credit-card at the newspaper's desk, could reveal when, where and by whom this newspaper was bought.

Birthdays

Prof Evelyn Ebsworth, vice-chancellor, Durham University; 63: Prince Hans Adam II, ruler of Liechtenstein; 62: Donna Shalala, US Secretary for Health; 62: Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman, English Heritage, 64.

Roger Omond

Quiet crusader's chronicle of courage

ROGER OMOND, who has died aged 51, has been remembered as a journalist on two continents and in two different types of journalism.



Roger Omond... ditched his inhibitions PHOTO: KAREN FLUCHS

Born in East London, South Africa, he joined the Daily Dispatch there after graduating from Rhodes University in Grahamstown. He made an early impact as a political correspondent at 23 and night editor at 25, then as leader writer until his appointment as assistant editor and his departure from South Africa in 1971 for political reasons.

because it meant he vetted all copy through to the final edition at a time when we were being subjected to countless threats of prosecution under the apartheid laws. The joke was that he was my editorial minder, and he was so good at it that although I was prosecuted 14 times during my 12 years of editorship I was never convicted.

could only have benefited from his ability and his deep background of knowledge of the Eastern Cape, home region of the Mandela, Sobukwe and Biko.

Although I was prosecuted 14 times during my editorship, I was never convicted. Roger had sussed the system

risk of police roadblocks to help set up our escape from South Africa.

When my wife and I went to see Roger in the intensive care unit at Brompton Hospital last week he seemed deeply unconscious, yet when we talked to him and asked if he knew we were there he opened his eyes and nodded slightly, and though we were elated at the brief communication we knew it was our last wish him.

Death Notices

Roger Omond, journalist, born December 2, 1944; died February 12, 1996.

ALLSOUP: Margaret Ruth Broadbent died on February 12 at the Lyle Centre Hospice and was buried at St. Paul's Church, Hove, Sussex, on Friday 16th February 1.30pm.

What made his burden harder to bear until he came to terms with it was the cruel timing of the first prognosis. He had been appointed editor-designate of the Dispatch news which delighted all of us who knew him, and was excitedly planning the move to South Africa when the first cancer was diagnosed.

Jackdaw

know about her, but I work out three times a week, roller blade every day and eat a low fat diet.

Put it out!

DEAR MARVIN, I am a 24-year-old gay man who lives in New York City. I began smoking cigars when a professor of mine at New York University handed them out to celebrate the birth of his baby boy. I was 19 at the time...

DO YOU BELIEVE IN LIFE AFTER DEATH? We do. Kidney research saves lives. So do legacies.

NATIONAL KIDNEY RESEARCH FUND 3 Archers Court, Shalbury Road, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2LN. Tel 01249 750100. Registered Charity No. 262822

Governor's Inflation da

KAY, Alfred, 65, died on February 10th 1996 peacefully in hospital and of Epsom, Surrey. He was the husband of Molly, much loved father of Martin and Steven. He will be sadly missed. Family flowers only please. Donations to the Parkinson Disease Society, Service and Central of Agecroft Park, 10 Green Lane, Epsom, Surrey, on Thursday 15th February at 10.00am. Enquiries to Guy Paine, 10 Green Lane, Epsom, Surrey, on Wednesday 7th February at 2.30pm. Deeply loved wife, mother, friend and reader. Please donate to Cancer Research Campaign.

Dan Glaister

Jackdaw wants your jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk. Fax 0171-713 4366. Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Handwritten text at the bottom of the page: كمال الدين

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Assistant 'helped launder Nadir cash'

Jury told of theft to pay debts

By Dan Atkinson

TYCOON Asil Nadir stole £383,050 from his Polly Peck trading empire to meet private debts, and used his personal assistant, Elizabeth Forsyth, to launder the money, an Old Bailey court was told yesterday. She handled the money knowing or believing it to be stolen, according to the Crown.

Healed that the money was stolen" when she handled it, said Mr Calvert-Smith. He was opening the Crown case against Mrs Forsyth on two charges of handling stolen property. The 59-year-old former banker and company chairman, who lives in Great Dunmow, Essex, has pleaded not guilty.

chairman of Polly Peck, "a substantial company". He had needed a large sum of money to pay private debts and he stole the money from Polly Peck, using Mrs Forsyth to launder the funds.

Rebel pressure leaves Farnell deal in doubt

By Patrick Donovan
City Editor

PLANS by Farnell Electronics to buy US-based Premier Industrial Corporation in a £1.85 billion deal were last night hanging in the balance as one of the company's former directors drummed up investor opposition in advance of tomorrow's key shareholders extraordinary general meeting.

essary 75 per cent shareholders' majority at tomorrow's Yorkshire egm.

ously the management often referred to by analysts and the press as being some of the key people responsible for the outstanding success since becoming a plc.

Governor signals inflation danger

By Sarah Ryle

THE Governor of the Bank of England, Eddie George, last night admitted that he and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kenneth Clarke, had clashed over last month's cut in interest rates.

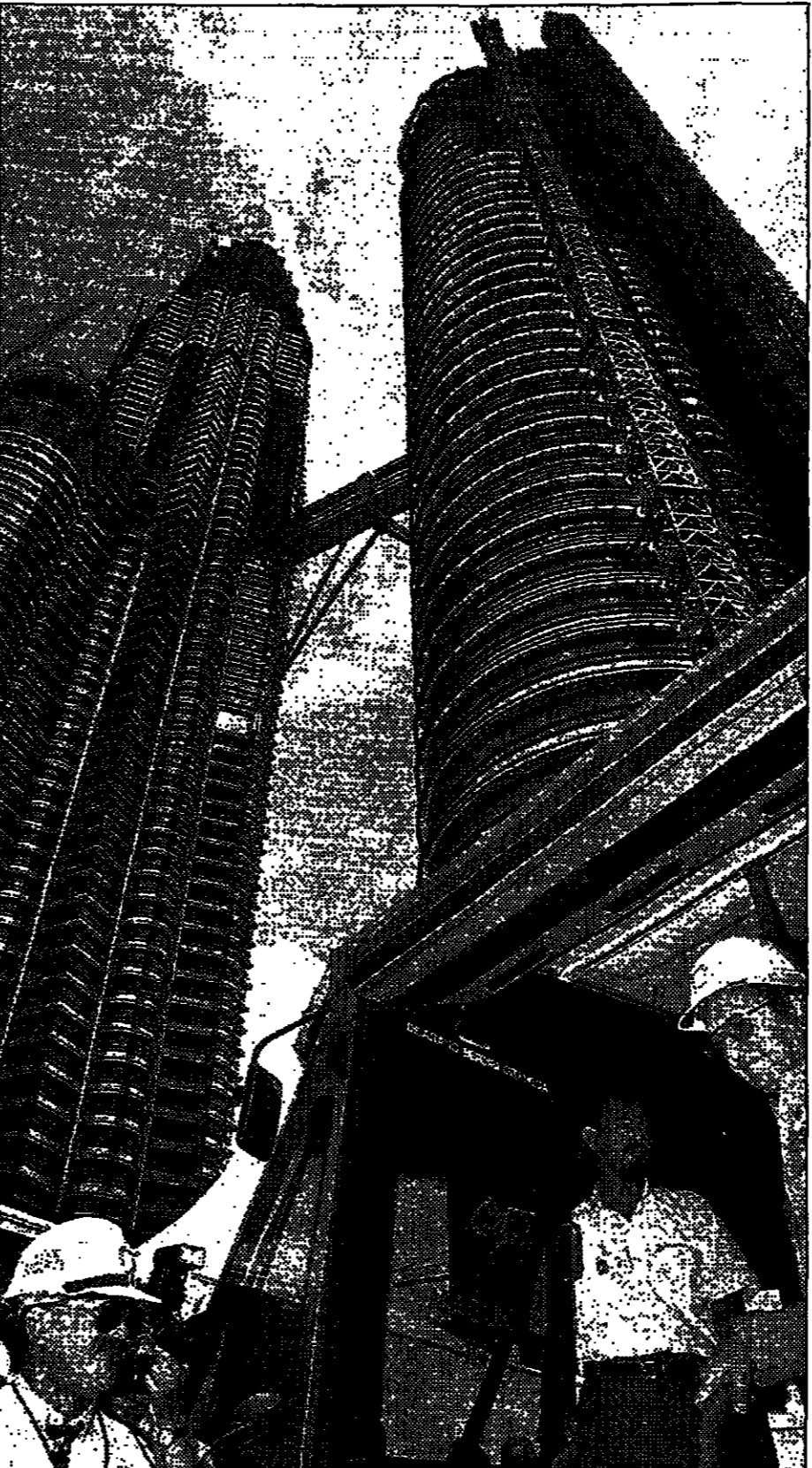
more rapid increase in earnings that too could be a factor," he said. He told BBC Radio Five Live's Financial World Tonight programme that the differences were technical rather than about the agreed objectives of price stability.

Cost-cutting BP pledges dividends bonanza

By Patrick Donovan
City Editor

BRITISH Petroleum chairman, Sir David Simon, yesterday pledged shareholders a 45 per cent increase in the shareholders' payout for 1996.

Oil company sets record for tall storeys



Going up... Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad, right, oversees topping-out of oil company Petronas's 88-storey Petronas Towers, Kuala Lumpur, set to become the tallest building in the world when completed at the end of this year. PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID LON

Railtrack seeks £1.5bn credit line before sale

By Keith Harper
Transport Editor

RAILTRACK, which runs Britain's rail and trunk signalling, has applied to 12 banks for a credit facility to raise £1.5 billion before its expected sell-off in May.

weeks before the planned flotation on May 21.

run freight trains on its lines. Such a move would cost less than £200 million a year and would have the effect of reducing the cost of freight operations by up to two thirds and thereby stimulate rail traffic.

Union leaders try to rescue whistleblowers' bill

By Richard Thomas

TRADE union leaders were attempting an eleventh-hour rescue of a bill designed to protect people who blow the whistle on malpractice at work, and which could prevent future BCCI-style collapses or Maxwell scandals.

the bill is to proceed any further.

cusations by disgruntled workers. To receive any protection, an employee must first raise the issue with their own superiors.

Notebook Spanish custom at work in City



Edited by Alex Brummer

THE shortness of the City's collective memory is quite remarkable at times. Take the reorganisation going on at the First Spanish Investment Trust, which is being converted into, of all things, a vehicle investing in small Australian holding companies.

an Aussie fund, it is at the same time helping turn First Spanish into one. Manoeuvres such as this again raise questions about the quality of City advice and regulation.

Changing down

EDZARD Reuter yesterday heralded a significant turning-point in post-war German industrial history by severing his links with Daimler-Benz after more than 30 years. His resignation from the supervisory board, just nine months after stepping down as Daimler's chief executive, is not just an acknowledgment that his personal strategy of the rashly acquisitive dash to turn Germany's largest industrial corporation into an "integrated technology conglomerate" brought it, almost inexorably, to its record £2.65 billion losses last year.

Hollick's soap

IT MIGHT have been thought that Lord Hollick has enough on his plate with the proposed £3 billion merger with Lord Stevens' party just off the presses. But not a bit of it. Now the once camera-shy Labour peer is demonstrating his Murdoch-like ambitions by challenging such established players as Pearson, Rank and Disney in the lucrative theme park sector.

This comes at a time when Hollywood clearly sees Britain as a promising offshore centre.

News in brief

Unilever wins £17m tax case

Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch group, yesterday won an Appeal Court judgment that will save it £17 million in tax even though its claims were lodged too late. Master of the Rolls Sir Thomas Bingham said the Inland Revenue abused its power in abandoning an understanding with the company over the timing of claims. He said Unilever was "an honest and compliant taxpayer".

Apple for teachers

Apple Computer and Cambridge-based Acorn Computer yesterday announced a £5 million joint venture in the British educational market, which has traditionally used Acorn computers but is increasingly buying IBM-compatible PCs using Microsoft Windows.

BOC deflated

BOC Group, Britain's largest industrial gas maker, warned of an unexpected slowdown in demand in December. Despite news that the group had increased its profits by 13 per cent in the first quarter of the year, BOC's shares dipped 2 per cent to 929p on news it expected demand in the US industrial gases market to slacken.

Singapore bars BICC

Singapore barred BICC and four other foreign companies from new government contracts for five years after they were named in a corruption case, a government official said. BICC Supertension Cable, Pirelli, Siemens and two Japanese companies were named in court documents in the prosecution last November of Choy Hon Tim, former deputy chief executive of the Public Utilities Board, who was convicted of accepting bribes from a consultant to the companies.

AIB profits up

Allied Irish Banks pushed its profits up 9 per cent to £137.26 (£390.6 million) in 1995 after increasing its loan book and reducing bad debts. Expansion of the Irish econ-

Car group skids

MORE than £9 million was wiped off the value of European Motor Holdings after the car dealership group issued a profits warning.

TOURIST RATES - BANK SELLS			
Australia 1.97	France 7.50	Italy 2.335	Singapore 2.15
Austria 15.25	Germany 2.1025	Malta 0.5425	South Africa 5.4
Belgium 45.00	Greece 337.00	Netherlands 2.4225	Spain 183.50
Canada 2.04	Hong Kong 11.85	New Zealand 2.23	Sweden 10.48
Denmark 8.075	India 56.55	Norway 8.90	Switzerland 1.78
Denmark 8.49	Ireland 0.9950	Portugal 228.00	Turkey 83.812
Finland 8.87	Israel 4.78	Saudi Arabia 5.88	USA 1.4950

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

The cost of covering against disaster is set to soar

Insurance threat to nuclear firms

Simon Beavis and Chris Barrie

THE privatised nuclear power industry may face a soaring insurance bill to protect itself against the risk of a major disaster if the recommendations of a key report by MPs is accepted by the Government.

In a second blow to the industry's hopes, nuclear reactors may also lose their priority status in the electricity trading system because the MPs fear they will otherwise have an unfair advantage.

The recommendations are included in a confidential draft report by the Trade and Industry Select Committee — the contents of which were first revealed by the Guardian last Saturday. MPs are due to meet today to try to agree the final wording of the report.

The draft report recommends that the industry's newest station, Sizewell B, be

left out of this summer's sell-off for fear the sale will raise less than it costs to build the £2.9 billion reactor.

It also argues that Government money for a special ring-fenced fund to pay for cleaning-up reactors is inadequate and the cost of meeting uncovered charges for decommissioning and waste disposal could render the industry uneconomic.

But the recommendations on nuclear accident insurance and on operating in the electricity pool will be critically important for the privatised firms' revenues.

Unusually, the British nuclear industry operates under a generous insurance regime. The industry has a limited liability for a single incident capped at £140 million. The Government picks up the next £140 million and then must provide further funds if Parliament agrees.

MPs on the influential cross-party committee want the industry brought in line with other industrial compa-

nies which have to cover themselves for much higher sums.

But in a further sting, they want the nuclear company being lined up for privatisation, British Energy, to pay an extra premium to the Government for any state guarantees beyond the higher amount insured.

The draft also recommends that rules under which nuclear reactors have a special "must run" status in the electricity market because of their supposed inflexibility, should be scrapped.

The committee believes the reactors should be forced to pit themselves against other types of generation without protection and is pressing for changes in the Grid code which rules the order in which power stations on to the system.

MPs on the committee are to meet today to try to agree the report on this summer's planned sale which is thought unlikely to raise more than £2.5 billion.

Reactors on long and risky road to retirement

THE problem of paying the huge costs of dismantling retired nuclear power stations and finding a safe place to store waste has been most of the world's nuclear powers, writes Simon Beavis.

The long-term environmental legacy of nuclear power has been a subject for political debate around the globe. The issue has pushed a number of countries, like Germany and Italy, to rein in or abandon this form of power.

generation despite the shorter-term benefits atomic energy offers in terms of lower emissions.

It was the bill — now estimated at £25 billion — for decommissioning Britain's nuclear power stations that forced the Government to scrap its first attempt to sell off the industry in 1989. The City refused to take on the risk. The select committee report suggests that the uncertainties remain and voices even more concern about waste.

It recognises that Britain has a tested way of burying low-level waste at Drigg, Cumbria. But it expresses alarm that a proposed deep underground dump for medium waste in Sellafield, Cumbria, is subject to an inquiry which it may not survive. It says there is no strategy for disposing of high-level waste after it has been stored in liquid form and then turned into glass blocks.

The need to deal with dangerous radioactive material means that decommissioning and waste disposal plans stretch into the future. The shorter time for completing the job of dismantling stations is seen as about 70 years.

But the industry wants to spread the programme over 135 years in a "safe-store" programme because this would allow work to be carried out without special protection — therefore cutting costs.

Decommissioning falls into three phases. First is the removal of fuel immediately after shutdown. Ten years later, buildings outside the reactor shield would be disposed of. Finally, after up to 100 years later, the reactor would be dismantled.

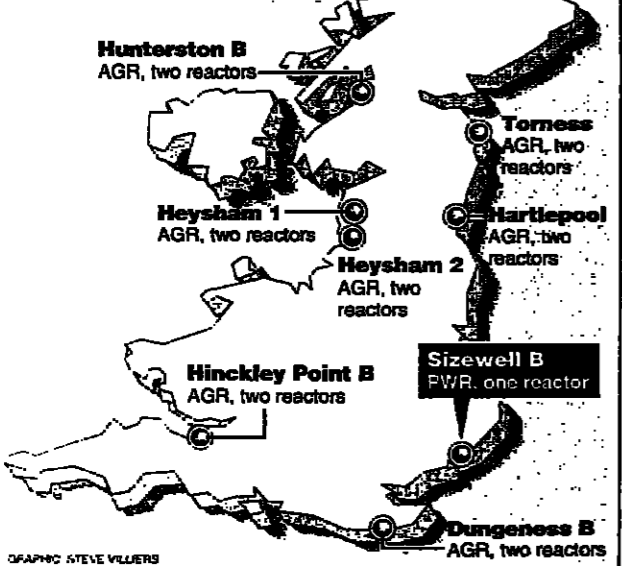
The industry's preferred route is to delay the second and third stages for 30 to 35 years to allow radioactivity to subside. But even altering the timescale of work means the "back-end" costs are huge.

Current estimates are that it will cost £14.3 billion in undiscounted costs to clean up the ageing Magnox reactors, which are not being sold off and will be shut down first.

The bill for the newer privatisation stations — seven advanced gas cooled reactors and Sizewell B — could be £11.5 billion. The committee is concerned that not all these costs have been covered in the Government's plans to set up a fund to pay the bill.

The report estimates some £1.4 billion may remain uncovered.

Nuclear stations for sale



Getting wired... Reuters chief executive Peter Job announcing increased profits yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

£599m profits come on line for Reuters

Outlook/ Shareholders should get their fair share, writes Roger Cowe

RUTERS is a most unusual company — unusual in its caution, despite the fact that it has consistently delivered substantial growth in profits since it was floated off by its newspaper owners in 1984.

That pattern continued in 1995, with earnings per share growing by almost a fifth and profits of £599 million, it announced yesterday.

The nature of Reuters' business is also unusual. Its former newspaper ownership reflects its origins and its classification as a media company. But in its early days in the middle of the last century, Paul Julius Reuter made money by providing financial information to the stock markets. That has long been the main engine of growth, especially since Reuters moved into technology in the 1960s.

Now Reuters is a technology company as anything else. That is emphasised by its attitude to the Internet, the worldwide communications network accessed from personal computers. "It is unlikely to be as much of a disrupter as an opportunity," commented chief executive Peter Job yesterday.

Mr Job is characteristically cautious about the prospects for profits, and reluctant to

take a dogmatic stance on the Internet. "I would like the latitude to change my mind", he said, reflecting the fact that the Internet's technology is way ahead of any consensus on who will use it, how it will be used and how anybody will make money out of it.

Reuters is providing news to 30 web sites, where it has registered 10 million "hits" a month, a pretty high level of interest. The company has also taken a 2.5 per cent stake in Yahoo, one of the Internet service providers whose products help users find their way through the worldwide maze.

Reuters also hopes to benefit from the technology of one of its recent acquisitions, Teknekon, whose expertise is in managing data flows.

There may also be opportunities for some of Reuters' transaction processing skills, but that appears to remain a long-term possibility rather than a clear plan.

Mr Job is used to thinking long term, and has to do so in this area of his business more than most. "It is a very long-term strategy. There is no huge profit in the short term," he said yesterday. Indeed, profit is one of the concepts least clearly understood in the maze of fuzzy ideas surrounding the Net, as Mr Job

acknowledged. "It is very important that new media should be profitable, not just fashionable. I don't believe in doing it just to be there." And he is not doing that, although the level of profit is tiny.

Low profits is not the norm at Reuters, as the figures show. Growth in sales, accompanied by the kind of fierce cost control which has brought the journalists' union to the brink of a strike, has resulted in hefty profits. The US business remains barely profitable, except for the Teknekon and Instinet acquisitions, but that is more than balanced by growth elsewhere.

The result has been huge cash flows, which Mr Job says he is unable to spend, despite substantial capital investment and development spending. Last year Reuters spent £191 million on development, up by a fifth on the previous year, and invested £304 million, slightly down on 1994. Even so it ended the year with over £200 million more in the bank than it started with. Mr Job wants to give some of that back to shareholders, subject to negotiating the legal and tax maze here and in the US.

"We are investing just about as fast as we can", he said. "And we are prepared to make small buys — we have done 40 since 1984. But there will still be surplus cash."

In that case there can be lit-

tle argument with giving some money back to shareholders. Except that if a company has more money than it can spend, even with Mr Job's oft-repeated caution about the impact of financial mergers on demand for his products, it must surely mean that prices are too high or wages are too low, or both.

In this age of stakeholder awareness, it is time to cry: "what about the stakeholders?" That would be really unusual.

Reuters

Stock market value: £11.3 bn
Share price: 675p + 31p
Workforce: 13,000
Interest cover: n/a

Main activities: Products and services delivering financial and general news and financial transactions electronically.

Pre-tax profit	£	% change
1995	2,700	17
1994	2,300	17
1993	2,000	19

Geographical and... product analysis

Region	Sales (£m)	Profits (£m)
Europe M. East & Africa	100	20
Asia Pacific	300	40
Americas	700	100

Product Analysis: Transactions (70%), Media (5.0%), Information

The Open University
BUSINESS SCHOOL

The fast track management certificate

Now you can achieve a Professional Certificate in Management in under a year, with the Open University Business School.

The certificate covers managing people, operations, information, resources and finance.

As world leaders in supported distance learning, we offer everything you need to make learning effective and enjoyable.

You work in your own time, at your own pace. But your personal tutor is only a phone call away, and you can meet fellow students through study groups and residential schools.

All OUBS courses are backed by over 25 years' experience in distance learning. Our methods and materials were given the highest rating of 'excellent' by the Higher Education Funding Council England.

For details of our courses return the coupon. Or call the 24-hour OUBS Hotline.

Business is changing. Are you?

Send to: Customer Service Centre, PO Box 625, Milton Keynes MK1 1TY. Please send me Management development prospectus (the new prospectus will be published early February).

Name: _____ 8957X

Position: _____

Organisation: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____

OUBS Hotline 01908 654321

University education and training open to all adults

Bondholders of Barings likely to take legal action

Tony May

BONDHOLDERS who lost £100 million when the former Barings Bank collapsed are expected to decide today to sue former Barings directors to recover their money.

They may also take legal action against the firms who advised Barings when it issued the bonds. They are BZW Securities, Hoare Govett Securities, and Cazenove.

Jonathan Stone, a lawyer heading the Barings Perpetual Noteholders Action Group, is meeting today with individual bondholders who lost money when the merchant bank collapsed a year ago after trader Nick Leeson ran up losses of \$880 million.

If they pursue the case, the action group will sue some of the 21 former executives and directors of Barings for their roles in the collapse. The executives were sacked last May, two months after Dutch banking company ING took over the assets of Barings.

The executives are currently under investigation by the Securities and Futures Authority for their roles leading up to the collapse and face the loss of their licences to work in the investment industry.

Because ING did not buy the Barings holding company, it intended that it did not have to pay the bondholders and offered them only 5 per cent of their investment.

Leeson said in his current autobiography, "Rogue Trader," that he was easily able to fool Barings executives into thinking he was generating enormous profits for them while he was actually losing hundreds of millions of pounds in failed options and futures trades in 1994.

Young pay dear for free market

Workforce/Jobless under-20s upset the theorists. Seumas Milne reports

IF THE Government's enthusiasm for deregulating the labour market has yielded results for anyone, it ought to be under-25-year-olds.

Young people were the first to lose minimum wage protection, the first to be denied jobs, and the first to be affected by weakening trade union organisation.

According to free-market economics and government policy prescriptions for the past 17 years, the pay-off should have been jobs by the bucketful. The relative position of 16- to 24-year-olds has, however, worsened in the 1990s: the gap between youth unemployment and the overall rate is greater than in the mid-1980s, according to figures culled from the Labour Force Survey by the TUC.

And, unlike the 1980s recovery, there has been no narrowing of the gap between the two rates in the jobs pick-up of the past three years.

The Labour Force Survey data show that while in 1992 youth unemployment was 1.67 times the rate for all ages, three years later the under-25 rate of 15 per cent had reached 1.79 times the national average. The situation was even more acute for men in their early 20s, whose jobless rate rose from 1.8 times the average in 1994 to nearly twice the average in 1995.

What makes the figures even more surprising is that they have deteriorated at a

Buy the Sony today. Pay no line rental until May.

This huge bargain on Britain's smallest phone is only available from Cellphones Direct.

Buy the performance-packed Sony CM-R111K connected free to Vodafone LowCall and you pay no line rental until 1st May 1996. So the sooner you order, the more you save with this exclusive offer, which includes £139 RRP worth of genuine Sony accessories.

Simply phone us with your credit card details to receive your phone plus valuable extras within 4 working days.

FREE CONNECTION TO VODAFONE LOWCALL WITH NO TARIFF INCREASES GUARANTEED FOR LIFE

Monthly Rental	£15 (£12.77 + VAT)
Peak Hour Calls (1st min)	50p per min (42.5p + VAT)
Off Peak Calls	20p per min (17p + VAT)

Peak times: 09:00-19:00 Mon to Fri. Mandatory International charges at £1.77 inc VAT per month. Line rental charges will be debited to your nominated credit/debit or Direct Card. Calls charged in units of 30 seconds after the first minute.

GUARANTEED PEACE OF MIND Your phone is covered by our 14 days no-questions-asked money-back promise.

SONY
MODEL CM-R111K.

- 9 speed dial memories
- 60mins talk-time
- 14hrs standby-time
- Featherweight only 185g (6 1/2 oz)
- Complete with charger and standard battery

EXCLUSIVE OFFER SONY CM-R111K £19.99 INC. VAT PLUS FREE LINE RENTAL UNTIL 1st MAY 1996

SONY REMOTE COMMANDER SONY EARPHONE MICROPHONE SONY LONG AERIAL TOGETHER WORTH £139 RRP

THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE AFTER SALES SERVICE AVAILABLE INCLUDES:

- 1 Year Parts & Labour Guarantee
- 24 Hour Customer Care Line
- Same day repair from Sony
- Warranty of 10 years on Sony
- Direct & Home services
- 30 Day Return Guarantee
- FREE OF THE TRADING OF THE SONY CORPORATION, JAPAN

Cellphones

ORDER NOW FOR FREE DELIVERY IN 4 WORKING DAYS

FREEPHONE 0500 000 888

CREDIT CARD ORDERING HOTLINE WEEKDAYS 9AM TO 9PM WEEKENDS 9AM TO 6PM

PLEASE HAVE YOUR CREDIT CARD AND THIS AGREEMENT READY WHEN YOU CALL. (YOUR PHONE WILL BE ANSWERED BY A MEMBER OF OUR STAFF.)

Offer subject to status and a standard distance contract for each phone with Cellphones Direct Ltd. 188 Lower Richmond Road, Richmond-upon-Thames, TW9 1LN. Full terms, details and conditions of this offer are available on request. © Copyright. Registered No. 299522.

John Jones

Racing

Nahthen Lad on time and weight

Chris Hawkins
THIS afternoon's rearranged Ascot meeting (it was abandoned because of rain) represents an ideal stepping stone for Cheltenham and many of today's runners have the Festival as their principal objective.

Mulligan should be able to give 3lb to Major Summit. St Mellon Fairway, a dual winner at Lingfield, also gets 3lb. He is hard to assess, but David Nicholson has some very good young chasers and rates him highly.

Although Buckhouse Boy (2.30) is 9lb wrong at the weights in the Stanley Enterprises Hurdle, it would be a great surprise to see him win. This rapidly improving six-year-old made light of 11st 10lb when beating 32 rivals in a Warwick handicap last time and is taking on higher rated but largely disappointing performers this afternoon.

Landed Gentry (1.00) is taken to win the Kilbane Handicap Hurdle for the second season running despite being 9lb higher in the ratings. He bolted in last year. Walter Swinburn is slowly on the mend according to Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club Director Philip Johnston but still remains in a serious condition. Doctors have received consent from the jockey's father Wally to operate on the 34-year-old to make sure his broken bones are in the correct position so that he can ride again.

He is still having breathing difficulties due to fluid that has accumulated on his lungs, but is breathing without the aid of a ventilator. Still heavily sedated, Swinburn was not yet able to recognise his father when he visited him in hospital yesterday and will remain in intensive care for at least another two days.



Sandstormers... the field for yesterday's Say It With Roses Stakes top the rise at Lingfield's all-weather track

Keeping punters in the know...

FROM March 31 it will be mandatory for trainers to report anything which might have had an adverse effect on a horse during a race, writes Chris Hawkins. Any subsequent improvement in performance should, therefore, come as a surprise and the betting public, upset about non-triers, can feel less aggrieved.

Ascot runners and riders with TV form

Table listing Ascot runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Ascot runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Ascot runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Ascot runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Ascot runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Ascot runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Ascot runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Lingfield

Table listing Lingfield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Lingfield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Lingfield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Lingfield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Lingfield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Lingfield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Lingfield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Sedgefield

Table listing Sedgefield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Sedgefield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Sedgefield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Sedgefield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Sedgefield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Sedgefield runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Wolverhampton AW Flat

Table listing Wolverhampton AW Flat runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Wolverhampton AW Flat runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Wolverhampton AW Flat runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Wolverhampton AW Flat runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Wolverhampton AW Flat runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Wolverhampton AW Flat runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Wolverhampton AW Flat runners and riders with TV form. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and TV form details.

Table listing Ascot results. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and finishing position.

Table listing Lingfield results. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and finishing position.

Table listing Sedgefield results. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and finishing position.

Table listing Wolverhampton AW Flat results. Columns include race name, runner name, jockey, and finishing position.

RACELINE FULL RESULTS SERVICE 021-168-168. A promotional box for a racing results service with a phone number and a small logo.



On the edge... Atle Skardal races to Norway's first Super-G world championship gold and his own first major title in Sierra Nevada yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: RUBEN SPRICH

Skiing Skaardal breaks a big duck

ATLE SKAARDAL, who had never won a major title, became Norway's first super-giant slalom gold medalist when he won the event at the world championships in southern Spain's Sierra Nevada yesterday.

Skaardal, sixth in the 1994 Olympics at Lillehammer, managed 1 min 21.80sec, too quick by 0.29sec for Sweden's Patrik Jaerbyn, who was second. "I was very insecure when I took a look at the course this morning," said Skaardal, dedicating the win to his grandfather, who died in January.

"I wasn't sure how to navigate it. But I had a super feeling in the start-house and went down without a mistake. My main concern was adjusting my edges and deciding how hard I should take the turns. You can lose or win a lot of time on them."

He contests the men's downhill on Saturday, his 30th birthday. Jaerbyn, who has had a disappointing World Cup season after two silvers and a bronze at the 1994 Olympics, was the first man down and produced a surprisingly fast 1:22.09 on the 1.37-mile, 44-gate piste which was powdered by fresh overnight snow.

Jones fined £2,000 over 'squealers'

Russell Thomas
VINNIE JONES has been fined £2,000 by the Football Association for his scathing newspaper attack on Ruud Geurts and foreign players. It means the transfer-seeking Wimbledon midfielder has been docked an astonishing £26,250 in three years by Lancaster Gate for his disciplinary excesses. In that time Jones has been fined five times and the FA considered banning him over the printed attack in which he likened Geurts to a "cock-roach" and accused Chelsea's Dutchman and other foreign imports of "squealing". But the FA spokesman Steve Double said of Jones's latest punishment: "He was hit in the pocket rather than with a suspension because we accepted that Wimbledon did not have any control over the article — or him."

Teamtalk

The Independent News and Reports Service
Call 0891 33 77+

Arsenal	06	Ipswich Town	19	Sheff Wed	15
Aston Villa	11	Leeds United	03	Sheff Wed	14
Birm. City	34	Leicester City	35	Southampton	20
Blackburn	21	Liverpool	04	Stoke City	30
Bolton	36	Man. City	02	Sunderland	27
Brentford	34	Man. United	01	Tottenham Hot.	07
Burnley	21	Middlesbrough	23	West Ham	12
Chelsea	08	Milwall	29	Wimbledon	28
Coventry City	17	Newcastle Utd	16	Wolves	37
Derby County	28	Norwich City	18	Celtic	09
Everton	06	Notm. Forest	13	Rangers	10
Hudd. Town	32	QPR	25		

Sport
Guardian

Laws ready to go after Bonetti fracas

Ian Ross
GRIMSBY Town's FA Cup meeting with West Ham tonight could mark the end of Brian Laws' managerial reign at Blundell Park. Laws offered to resign yesterday in the wake of an incident at Luton on Saturday when he allegedly punched one of his own players, the Italian Ivano Bonetti, in the dressing-room after Grimsby's 3-2 defeat. "I don't want to talk about what happened or what my plans might be because I don't want anything to overshadow the club's main objective, which is defeating West Ham." The injuries could rule him out for six weeks.

Bonetti added: "I have always got on brilliantly with the rest of the players and with the fans; I feel married to Grimsby Town. Clearly I face a very difficult decision. I will give it much thought and consideration." Although Grimsby's chairman Bill Carr and his board confusingly continued to insist that the matter was closed, it is likely either Laws or Bonetti will depart before the weekend. Laws, who succeeded Alan Buckley in November 1994, is a popular figure at Grimsby but he certainly does not enjoy the sort of cult status afforded to Bonetti. Indeed the former Juventus

and Sampdoria player is at Grimsby only because fans helped raise £50,000 to buy out his contract from an American management company last year. Laws' predicament will have been noticed at Burnley. Twenty-four hours after Jimmy Mullin resigned as the Lancashire club's manager, Laws — a former Burnley player — was installed as one of the favourites to succeed him. The other leading contenders are thought to be Sheffield United's assistant manager Adrian Heath, Stockport's Dave Jones and Wrexham's Brian Flynn. "The South African interna-

Police cue in at St Andrews

Martin Thorpe
POLICE are to clamp down on security at Birmingham City following the billiard-ball throwing incident at St Andrews on Sunday. It was the latest in a catalogue of trouble involving the Midlands club and could lead to City being told to play at least one game behind closed doors. Police are also currently scanning their CCTV video of the Coca-Cola Cup tie to ascertain who hurled the billiard ball at Leeds's Gary McAllister and the coins which were also found on the pitch. Police will ask ITV for their footage. "We're scanning the film now to see if we can recognise anybody," said chief superintendent Colin McDonald, who is in charge of the club's policing although some 'low-risk' games have been police-free.

Birmingham's owner David Sullivan also appeared in the local press for witnesses to the incidents to come forward. McDonald will meet the City secretary Alan Jones on Thursday and recommend that policing be tightened for the rest of the season. He will also suggest that no more games should be police-free, as it takes as long as 30 minutes to the scramble officers to the ground. "The Birmingham striker Steve Claridge, 29, could be on his way out of the club after talks broke down over a new three-year contract."

Results

Soccer
FA TROPHY: Second round: Portsmouth 2-0 Luton, 1-0 Gloucester.
AFON HURDLE: 1st round: 1-0 Plymouth, 1-0 Birmingham.
FOUR-NATION TOURNAMENT: Thailand 1-0 Denmark, 3-0 Romania, 1-0 Finland, 2-0 Czech Republic, 1-0 Metz 2.

Rugby Union
CLUB MATCH: Caswell Park, 1-0 Northampton.

Rugby League
ALLIANCE CHAMPIONSHIP: 1st round: 1-0 Wakefield, 1-0 Hull KR 24.

Tennis
MARLBOROUGH OPEN: First round: 1-0 Andre Agassi (USA) 6-3, 6-4, 6-7, 7-6, 6-2; 2-0 Andre Agassi (USA) 6-3, 6-4, 6-7, 7-6, 6-2; 3-0 Andre Agassi (USA) 6-3, 6-4, 6-7, 7-6, 6-2.

Bowls
CHURCHILL INSURANCE WORLD INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS: (Preston): 1-0 England (Eng) 6-2, 2-4, 1-1; 2-0 England (Eng) 6-2, 2-4, 1-1; 3-0 England (Eng) 6-2, 2-4, 1-1.

Chess
KERS MEMORIAL: (Purton, Estonia): 1-0 N. Short (Eng) 6-2, 2-4, 1-1; 2-0 N. Short (Eng) 6-2, 2-4, 1-1; 3-0 N. Short (Eng) 6-2, 2-4, 1-1.

Fixtures

Soccer
FA CUP: Fourth round: 1-0 Luton, 1-0 Luton, 1-0 Luton.

Rugby Union
CLUB MATCH: 1-0 Northampton, 1-0 Northampton.

Rugby League
ALLIANCE CHALLENGE CUP: 1st round: 1-0 Wakefield, 1-0 Hull KR 24.

Golf

Nicklaus at end of long Open road

JACK NICKLAUS, with the announcement in Florida that he is unlikely to play in the Open at Royal Lytham St Annes from July 19 to 21, signalled the end of a relationship embracing 34 successive appearances since his debut at Royal Troon in 1962. He said he would enter the tournament as usual but would play only if his form warranted it at the time.

"The British Open is probably the most difficult of the major championships for me to play, simply because of the weather conditions," he explained. "I don't think my chances of going are good this year."

The 56-year-old Nicklaus, winner of 18 major titles in his long professional career, said that, barring an unexpected improvement in his fading form, his run of consecutive appearances in the majors would come to an end at 138 after this year's US Open.

"I've always felt that there is a certain time in all of our lives when the younger fellows should have their turn," said Nicklaus, who will make use of a special exemption granted to him to compete at Oakland Hills in Birmingham, Michigan. "I feel that now is the time to hand over the baton."

In addition to his appearances in Britain — three of them as a winner — Nicklaus has played in 39 successive US Opens, 37 consecutive Masters and the last 34 US PGA Championships. He played his first five US Opens and three Masters tournaments as an amateur.

"I'm not going to stop playing the majors altogether," said Nicklaus, who has been competing in select Senior Tour events. "I will still play the US Open if I qualify on my own and I may play the British Open or take part in a PGA Championship somewhere along the line."

"I have got to be realistic about my ability to compete at major championship level. I have noticed the last couple of years that I have not been nearly as strong as I think I should be."

Nicklaus, who played his first major when he took part in the 1967 US Open as a 17-year-old amateur, has won six Masters, five US PGAs and four US Opens.

Darts

John Duncan considers the difference between sport and pastime in the light of the Sports Council ruling that has put the jockeys of the oche off their aim

Darts swept from the board

OC TOPUSH is one. So is bicycle polo. Yoga has been for caravanning as well, until it was decided last year that it is not. Darts insists it is but has been told it is not. Bull, say the jockeys of the oche, who are now sharpening their arrows in a battle to prove that it is.

wouldn't recognise us because there is insufficient physical effort involved," said Ollie Croft of the British Darts Organisation. "But snooker makes darts look like the 100 metres. They spend 90 per cent of their time sitting down and sipping water, but they are recognised."



Defining moments

"An amusement, diversion, fun" Concise Oxford Dictionary "To be recognised by the Sports Council a sport must be sufficiently developed to justify the term 'national' and will be assessed on the physical skill and effort required to undertake it; accessibility; rules and organisation; strategy and tactics; essential purpose; physical challenge; risk; uniqueness; and other political, moral and ethical considerations. A minimum of 1,000 individuals regularly participating in an activity are normally required for it to be considered." Sports Council Policy Briefing Note, June 1994.

Cricket

Smith given World Cup all-clear

AS England prepared for this morning's opening World Cup match against New Zealand, Robin Smith won his fraught fitness battle with a week-old groin muscle injury. He could be back in action by Sunday.

Wales to raise roof and £108m

Robert Armstrong

WALES, who have selected an unchanged team for the first time for three years for Saturday's Five Nations match against Scotland at Cardiff Arms Park, expect to put together a £108 million package within the next fortnight for the re-development of the ground.



Think tank... Rob Howley keeps England on the back foot during his impressive debut at Twickenham 12 days ago

Home boy Howley hits the heights

Frank Keating meets the Wales scrum-half who hopes to match his outstanding debut at Twickenham against the Scots on Saturday

AT THE black-tied party at the Park Lane Hilton, after Wales at Twickenham had lost the match but won the plaudits, table No. 30 was shared, as is the custom, by the afternoon's four half-backs and each side's pair of flankers.

Serious knee injuries punctuated his form and advance - he even tried a faith-healer in Kendig Hill - but the engaging fellow had always been around the national squads, from schools to A-team levels.

'Boxer' defends his Test corner

Paul Weaver finds Angus Fraser pining for an England place

IT MAY have something to do with Angus Fraser's vast frame and clean, honest features but, even at the relatively young age of 30, he conveys the impression of exhausted excellence, noble but knackered - a little like Boxer in Animal Farm.

Muralitharan chases his arm

THE Sri Lankan off-spinning Muralitharan, who was called for throwing on the tour of Australia, came through yesterday's warm-up fixture against a combined India-Pakistan team in a Colombo without objection.

Tennis

Rocky bottom wrecks Capriati comeback

David Irvine in Paris JENNIFER CAPRIATI'S comeback was put on hold last night. Nothing concerning her life has been straightforward in recent years but, even by her bizarre standards, she completely wrong-footed the assembled media horde here by pulling out of the Paris Indoor tournament only an hour or so before she was due on court.

stretched too far for a return and strained a gluteal muscle on her right side. Capriati became a pain in the neck for the tournament organisers, who had already been deprived of their champion Steffi Graf through injury.

Sport in brief

Snooker Paul Hunter, the 17-year-old English junior champion, has been fined £2,000 plus £230 costs with £2,000 suspended against future good behaviour - by a WPBSA disciplinary committee, writes Clive Everton. Drink and lewd gestures played their part in a late-night incident at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool, last summer.

Cricket World Cup '96 Live Commentary 0891 22 88 28 Match Reports 0891 22 88 29 Chess Britain's grandmasters scored a double triumph in highly-rated international tournaments in Estonia and India, writes Leonard Barden. Nigel Short was an impressive winner, unbeaten in 10 games, in Purnu, and the England No. 3 Jon Speelman tied for first place with two former Soviets in Calcutta.

Giant leaps at Ascot, page 13

Spoil sports deny darts, page 15

Another fine for Vinnie Jones, page 14

Cardiff Arms and the man, page 15

SportsGuardian

BOXING PROMOTER LEFT REELING BY DELAYED BLOW



Double trouble... Frank Warren chose not to fight the DTI charges in court in order to avoid further legal problems over outstanding boxing commitments PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM JENKINS

Warren banned by DTI

Suspension follows four-year inquiry

John Duncan

FRANK WARREN has been banned as a company director for seven years in the High Court following a four-year Department of Trade and Industry investigation into the financial collapse of the London Arena in Docklands.

Warren did not contest the order and agreed that seven years was an appropriate ban after the judge, Mr Justice Blackburne, read out a statement of agreed facts.

Warren had sought a month's adjournment for the case, such as was granted on Monday in a similar DTI case involving the England football coach Terry Venables, but that request was refused.

The charges against Warren are some of the most serious that can be levelled against a company director. Among other things they relate to trading while his company Arena Developments (Europe) Ltd was insolvent; failure to comply with the requirements of the Companies Act as to the filing of annual returns and accounts; failure to maintain and preserve accounting records; and defaults in the submission of VAT returns.

Warren emphasised that he had not conceded that he had traded while insolvent, but required to be in court probably for two or three weeks and that would have meant he would have been in breach of these obligations. He could have been sued or lost a large amount of money. He couldn't afford to jeopardise all this by spending time on legal proceedings.

Warren has not been a company director since 1991 and thus none of his current business interests — Frank Warren Promotions or The Sports Network — will be affected. Warren's client list includes Naseem Hamed and Frank Bruno, both currently training for world title defences.

Re-educating America — as if by Magic



Vincent Hanna

like a man with bunions; couldn't leap a juice glass; shoots like a shot putter from the last century; and — oh, yes — is HIV positive.

Earvin "Magic" Johnson is back, the man who stunned us five years ago with the news that he had the Aids virus, another hero diminished, a life ruined. No one would go near him on the court. He was as much a sporting pariah as poor Tommy Morrison became at the weekend. Magic's fate was sealed.

BASKETBALL has always puzzled me. When it comes to dazzling hand skills, a marriage of physical strength to character, there are few things better in sport. But I find it difficult wholly to accept a game where, at the highest level, the star players are what, in normal society, would be regarded as freaks.

As with sumo wrestling, I marvel at what they do but cannot identify with them. And like sumo, the heroic images flicker briefly. The great moments pass in a flash. The paradox is that basketball, a game tailor-made for television, makes poor viewing — to me anyway. Maybe because the American public demands high-scoring games, there is not enough time to follow all the action, cram in the commercials and dwell on the poetry.

This week's 46th NBA All-Star game was won by the East (over the West) 129-118 but offered little of the modern, slow-motion analysis that complements art. Michael Jordan managed a couple of sublime moves (including one curving drive from the right with a back-handed flip shot) over which I should have lingered. But there was no time.

On Tuesday of last week the Lakers played the Golden State Warriors. Millions held their breath when, after two minutes, the coach Del Harris stroled along the bench and said: "Let's go."

He hunched about the court, then, in a twinkling, threw a wonderful fake to Latrell Sprewell, spinning him the wrong way and laying it in one-handed — a bolt of lightning that unified as it shocked.

Last Friday they played Jordan's all-conquering Chicago Bulls. Magic was marked by the unsentimental Dennis Rodman who battered the 6ft 9in mega-star all night in a lesson to those whose irrational fear of Aids had forced him to quit.

DEBENHAMS

Cookware event

1/3 Off

Le Creuset
Azure blue — exclusive to Debenhams

Plus offers on other famous brands like Meyer, Tefal and Prestige.

From now until 24 February

**While stocks last.*

THE DIFFERENCE IS DEBENHAMS

(including Browns of Chester)

Rowell brings back Richards

David Plummer

JACK ROWELL last night made another U-turn in his selection policy, calling up Dean Richards and sacking Tim Rodber and Martin Bayfield from the team to play Scotland in three weeks' time.

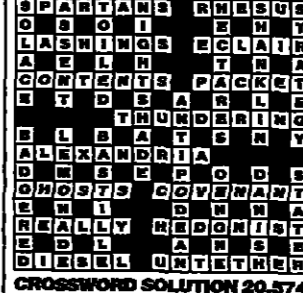
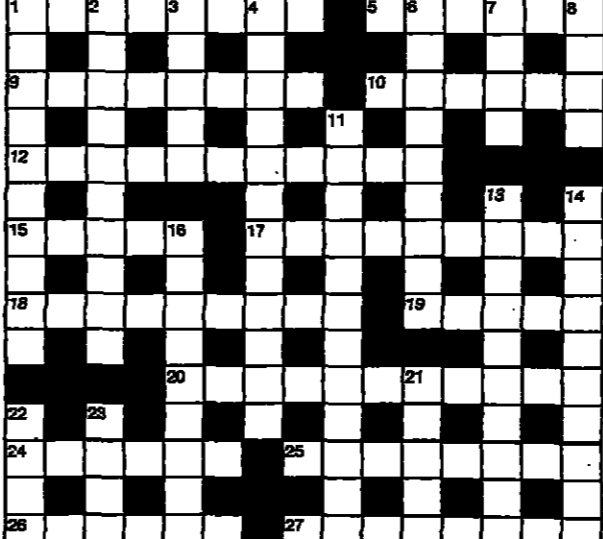
side which gives us some options in beating Scotland in the line-out," Rowell said last night.

G2 page 12

The visual rhetoric of love must endlessly defer the physical fact of the kiss, must harp on preludes and aftermaths. Otherwise love will be nothing but lips and tongue.

Guardian Crossword No 20,575

Set by Gemini



- Across**
- 1 The rear light goes out (4-4)
 - 5 Fashionable — and sexy? (4,2)
 - 9 That's about right: Northern Ireland is approaching a state of peace (8)
 - 10 Fan given a prison term (6)
 - 12 Rose and Iris will be at the wedding (6,5)
 - 15 A time for reflection when surveying the battleground (5)
 - 17 Cricket stroke providing the first run (4,5)
 - 18 Mortal, like Reynard (9)
 - 19 View of the sunrise across the lake (5)
 - 20 Together they make up a story (1,1)
 - 24 Proud, but from an high mercy is shown (6)
 - 25 Left Spaniard for West African (8)
- Down**
- 26 A form of credit, or debit (6)
 - 27 Numbers to note in singer's programme (8)
 - 1 For holding documents, basic fees may be about right (10)
 - 2 The many-meteor deployment showed the Air Force's determination (10)
 - 3 Raise your hat to the English creme de la creme (5)
 - 4 Casually reads through Punch, for instance (12)
 - 6 Commonwealth regiment presses round the flank (9)
 - 7,8 Injury when outside left stumbled is a break (4-4)
 - 11 Delivery point nearest to station (12)
 - 13 While away, write answer to the clue "Kiss of sentiment" (4) (4,2,4)
- 14** Means to gain over with bribes (10)
- 16** Is he about to enter Greek Orthodox? Definitely not (8)
- 21** Irish girl, up early, has early night (5)
- 22** Part-time staff under suspicion of taking stock (4)
- 23** The Yard is well-run (4)
- Solution tomorrow**
- © Published by Guardian Newspapers Limited at 110 Farringham Road, London EC1R 3EP, and at 164 Deansgate, Manchester M60 2ER. Printed at West Ferry Printers Ltd, 225 West Ferry Road, London E14 9NS, Trafalord Park Printers, Longbridge Road, Manchester M17 1SL. Telex: Guardian GMBX, Admitt-Rossendach-Grassie 1, 6078 New-Isenburg Zepplendamm, Germany. Nord-Edair, 1621 Rue de Caen, BP 98 - 9002 Poulley, Cedex 1, France. For and on behalf of the Guardian and Manchester Evening News PLC, 46-47, Wednesday February 14, 1996. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office ISSN 0951-9237. London: Telephone 0171-276 2222. Telex 821174 (Guard) G Fax 0171-837 2114. 0171-422 5242. Telephone sales 0171-811 8000. Manchester: Tel 0161-432 7200. Fax 0161-432 5251/0254 8717. Tel sales 0161-434 8288

كلمة من الشعر